

BURIED EMPIRES

The Earliest Civilizations of the Middle East

By

PATRICK CARLETON

M.A. (Cantab.)



LONDON

EDWARD ARNOLD & CO.

FIRST PUBLISHED, 1922

REPRINTED, 1939, 1944, 1948

**PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
JARROLD AND SONS, LTD., NORWICH**

PREFACE

The first intention of this textbook is to provide an easy introduction for the general reader—particularly for the student of Classical or Modern History or of Divinity—into a branch of historical study, our knowledge of which has been enormously enlarged during the last two decades. If I have also nursed a hope that the specialist may find something convenient in this collection of facts already known to him and occasionally even something suggestive in my very diffident interpretation of them, I have done so with a full consciousness of my own shortcomings. The progress of archæological research is now so swift—so almost breathless—that between the conception and publication of such a work as this new facts will inevitably come to light to modify the conclusions reached in it. The present textbook was originally written above two years ago. Since that time the publication in part of the official letters of the XX century B.C. discovered by M. Parrot at Mari have made it obvious that many of the statements concerning the chronology and order of events in Babylonia contained in Chapters VI–VII require to be reconsidered. The Mari documents, however, will require fuller study on the part of scholars more expert than myself before any final conclusions can be drawn from them. I have accordingly contented myself with foreshadowing in an Appendix the extent to which it seems possible that they may prove to contradict the narrative given in the text.

I take this opportunity of thanking Mr. Sidney Smith, Keeper of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities in the British Museum, for permission to refer to an unpublished inscription of the IV Dynasty of Uruk, and Mr. C. J. Gadd, Assistant Keeper, for an opportunity of collating the text of the Anuzu inscription from Ur, a translation of which is given on p. 106. Miss Mary Shaw, Curator of Egyptian Antiquities in Manchester University Museum, has helped me in various ways,

PREFACE

and the criticisms of my friend Mr. P. M. Bramwell have contributed to the general clarity of the text. For the right of reproducing illustrations I offer my most grateful acknowledgements to the Oriental Institute of Chicago, the Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, the Trustees of the British Museum, Messrs. Mansell and Co., Messrs. Probsthain, and my friend and one-time colleague Mr. J. C. Rose. My friend Mr. Geoffrey Ost has been kind enough to draw the selection of Highland pottery designs on Plate II. I have, too, particular pleasure in thanking my publishers, Messrs. Arnold, for their patient and generous assistance, especially in the preparation of the Maps, and Messrs. Butler & Tanner for the careful and accurate character of their printing.

In telling the story of the Sumerian and Akkadian rulers I have endeavoured as far as possible to let them speak for themselves. The translations of cuneiform inscriptions are, save where the contrary is expressly stated, my own. The expert will appreciate that in a popular work of this description smoothness and unambiguity are important desiderata and that, in consequence, I have sometimes allowed myself a certain, but I hope nowhere wholly unjustifiable, degree of liberty in the rendering of dubious passages.

P. C.

CONTENTS

| CHAP. | PAGE |
|---|------|
| I THE MIDDLE EAST | II |
| 1. General. | 11 |
| 2. Geography | 15 |
| 3. Archæological methods | 22 |
| 4. The Sumerians | 28 |
| II THE AGE OF PAINTED POTTERY | 33 |
| 1. Susa and el-'Ubeid | 33 |
| 2. Prehistoric Assyria | 44 |
| 3. The Northern Culture | 46 |
| 4. The Jemdet-Nasr Invasion | 60 |
| III SUMER AND AKKAD | 68 |
| 1. The Primitive Kings | 68 |
| 2. Early Historical Remains | 84 |
| 3. The <i>Isags</i> of Lagash | 97 |
| 4. The Semites | 108 |
| 5. Lugalzaggisi | 113 |
| 6. The Empire of Agade | 120 |
| IV THE CITIES OF THE INDUS | 137 |
| 1. The Indus Valley Discoveries | 137 |
| 2. Mohenjo-Daro | 146 |
| 3. Cultural Connections | 157 |
| 4. Âryans and Pre-Âryans | 162 |
| V THE SUMERIAN RENAISSANCE | 167 |
| 1. Gudea of Lagash | 167 |
| 2. The Expulsion of the Gutî | 176 |
| 3. The Empire of Ur | 179 |
| 4. Life under the Empire | 194 |

CONTENTS

| CHAP. | | PAGE |
|-------|---|------|
| VI | FROM THE FALL OF UR TO THE RISE OF BABYLON | 206 |
| | 1. The Amorite Invasion | 206 |
| | 2. Isin and Larsam | 212 |
| | 3. Ashur | 221 |
| | 4. The Coming Struggle | 224 |
| | 5. The Triumph of Babylon | 234 |
| | 6. The Code of Hammurabi | 253 |
| VII | EPILOGUE : THE NEW WORLD | 264 |
| | APPENDIX | 278 |
| | Chronological Tables, with a note on the Mari Documents | |
| | INDEX | 283 |

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

| | PLATES | FACING PAGE |
|--|--------|----------------|
| CONVENTIONALIZED DESIGNS FROM PAINTED POTTERY OF THE HIGHLAND CULTURE | | 36 |
| (<i>Various sites and periods</i>) | | |
| PAINTED POTTERY AND FRIT BOWL OF THE SYRIAN CULTURE | | 37 |
| (<i>From Arpachîyeh</i>) | | |
| BASALT STELA OF THE JEMDET-NASR PERIOD | | 62 |
| (<i>From Uruk</i>) | | |
| STELA OF NARÂM-SIN | | 63 |
| VOTIVE STATUE OF AN EARLY SUMERIAN | | 86 |
| (<i>From Eshnunna—c. 3000 B.C. or earlier</i>) | | |
| IDOLS OF THE GOD ABU AND HIS CONSORT | | 87 |
| (<i>From Eshnunna—early dynastic period</i>) | | |
| SKELETONS IN A ROOM OF THE LATE PERIOD, MOHENJO-DARO | | 154 |
| BRONZE FIGURE OF A DANCING GIRL, MOHENJO-DARO | | 154 |
| A STREET IN MOHENJO-DARO | | 155 |
| STATUE OF GUDEA | | 174 |
| SCULPTURED BOWL FROM UR | | 175 |
| (<i>Period, III Dynasty.</i>) | | |
| GATE OF THE FORTRESS BUILT AT UR BY WARAD-SIN | | 234 |
| PORTRAIT-STELA OF HAMMURABI | | 235 |

MAPS

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| I SOUTH-WESTERN ASIA | |
| II ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA | <i>at end</i> |

BURIED EMPIRES

CHAPTER I

THE MIDDLE EAST

1. *General*

The central truth of history is that no civilization can exist anywhere in the world without exercising at least some influence upon every subsequent civilization. History is a continuous and universal process. There is no point either in space or time where we can halt and say : 'Beyond this lies nothing that affects us.' We cannot imagine, for example, what modern Europe would be like if there had never been a Roman Empire. But Roman imperialism was largely made possible by the earlier conquests of Alexander the Great, who, in turn, caught the imperial idea from the Great Kings of Persia who had learnt it from the Assyrians. Or to illustrate the process in another way : I am writing this book in characters descended from those which the Phœnicians seem to have adapted from the Egyptian hieroglyphs. When it is done, I shall send it through the post—a public service first organized by the Persians—and receive in return a document of a kind invented by the merchants of ancient Babylon, requesting a banking-house with whom my publishers have credit to pay me a certain sum in metal coins, such as were originally struck in Assyria ¹ in the VIII century B.C., and paper notes, as used by the Chinese in Kublai Khan's day. Part of this money I shall assuredly spend on tobacco—a blessing we owe to the pre-Columban peoples of America—but a larger part will go

¹ 'Half-Shekel Pieces' of cast metal are known to have been current in Assyria at least as early as that time.

THE MIDDLE EAST

to provide me with a well-earned holiday at some spot reached by a train or boat driven by steam, whose propulsive powers were first discovered by a Hellenized Egyptian named Hero of Alexandria.

The above paragraph is not simply a conceit but an illustration of the unarguable fact—which I hope the reader will keep constantly in mind during the next chapters—that our present is so tightly bound up with our past (and not our past alone, but the past of every people who have ever tilled the ground or heated metal in a fire or piled two stones on one another) that the happenings of five thousand years ago are as much part of European and American history as the Industrial Revolution or the Great War. Most schoolboys, at any rate in the upper forms, are given some vague outline of world-events as far back as, perhaps, the Siege of Troy. They know that at that time (about three thousand years ago) there were three great areas of civilization in the Old World : one, that of Egypt, Babylon and Krete, and afterwards of Persia, Greece and Rome, centring round the E. Mediterranean ; one in India ; and one in China. They may also know that two more such centres were soon to arise (whether spontaneously or by some outside influence, we cannot say) in Central America and Peru. Of human history before that time, they know only the little that the Old Testament tells them. But written history, the history of civilized peoples, goes back not merely to 1000, but to 3000 B.C. ; and when the records fail us, archæological science is able to trace the growth of civilization backward for at least another thousand years. Of course, to describe, even in the briefest outline, all that we now know of the achievements of man in China, in India, in Mesopotamia, in Anatolia, in Syria, in Egypt, in Krete, in Cyprus and on the mainland of Greece, from Neolithic down to Homeric times, would be utterly outside the scope of this small book. Only one area will be dealt with, and only one period in the history of that area—the earliest one.

The history of civilization in the Middle East from the earliest times to the conquests of Alexander the Great can be chopped up roughly into three ages which we may call the Primitive Age, the Age of Consolidation and the Imperial Age. The

GENERAL

Primitive Age begins from the time when Neolithic man first learnt to smelt copper and supplement his tools of polished flint with it, and it ends round about 2000 B.C. It is an age of progress—of astonishingly rapid and far-reaching progress—opening in barbarism and closing in a state of culture which already possesses all the chief arts, writing, mathematics, law-making, kingship, religious teaching, architecture, sculpture, music and literature. At one end of it stand the wattle-and-daub huts of the savage, at the other, the pyramids of Egypt, the vast brick-built cities of the Sumerians and the ancient people of India, the Palace of Knossos.

The age which follows is uninteresting by comparison. There is a slowing-down of progress, in some cases an actual degeneration : but with it there goes a certain tightening-up of the bonds that hold society together. The power of the central government—of the Pharaoh of Egypt or the Great King of Babylon—is more firmly established, less easily defied by petty feudal chieftains. Invasions take place, barbarian races jostle their way into the civilized kingdoms ; but the changes they effect are small. They become ' Egyptianized ' or ' Babylonized ' themselves. The Shepherd Kings who seized the royal power in Egypt learnt to write their names in hieroglyphs and to worship the Egyptian gods. The Kassites who invaded Babylonia were soon indistinguishable from the native Babylonians. This is the age in which traditions and ways of life originating in the previous epoch harden into their final form.

The Imperial Age may be said to begin in about 1600 B.C. As its name implies, it is the period when Egyptians, Hittites, Assyrians, Babylonians and finally Persians squabbled fitfully over who should control the largest territories outside their own borders. But it is much more than this. It is an age of *international* as apart from *national* civilization. In the periods we have just glanced at, the few truly civilized nations were isolated from one another, cut off by huge tracts of country populated either by savages or not at all. Communication was difficult and trade restricted. Egyptian sailing-ships were cruising some way up the Syrian coast as early as about 2900 B.C., and Babylonian armies were marching to the

Lebanon a few centuries later ; but for all this, it is very doubtful whether the two nations had ever even heard of each other before about 2000 B.C. or later, and quite certainly there was nothing like regular communication between them. Now, in the Imperial Age, all this was altered. The savage and semi-savage peoples of the intervening lands had themselves grown civilized. The conquering armies of the greater nations reached each other's borders. Diplomacy came into being, and with it all that hugger-mugger of 'defensive alliances', 'secret treaties' and the rest that has been the curse of the world down to the present day. Pharaoh, the Great King, and the rulers of Assyria and the Hittite lands correspond with each other, and their letters—those famous 'El-Amarna Letters' of which some hundreds have survived—make amusing reading. Tushratta King of Mitanni (a Mesopotamian state) writes naïvely of the ambassadors sent him by Pharaoh Amunhotpe III : *I honoured them like gods and gave them quantities of gifts and made them very happy, for their mission was a happy one. As for all of them—I never saw men after their fashion !*

The old barriers were down for good. In the XV century B.C. a man might take ship from Mycenæ in Greece, touch at Krete, go on to Egypt and then journey by land through Palestine and Syria, turning finally eastward to the Indian Ocean or westward to Anatolia, and never be out of touch with people who possessed a settled government, letters and the arts : and so it has been ever since in these regions, despite all changes of race, language and religion.

It is of this age that the historical books of the O.T. and the earliest written history of Europe treat. There are Biblical critics who will have Amunhotpe or his son, the 'heretic' Ikhnaton, to be the Pharaoh of the Exodus ; and objects dating from their time have been found in the ruins of Mycenæ (which the Greeks say Perseus founded) to show that the forefathers of Agamemnon 'King of Men' traded with Egypt. Some two hundred years after Tushratta had feasted his Egyptian guests,¹ the Achæan heroes were celebrating their

¹ Some authorities, however, now put the Trojan War as early as 1500 B.C.

GEOGRAPHY

return from Troy : and it may have been at about the same time that Jael, her hand stealing out toward the workman's hammer, was offering Sisera butter in a lordly dish.

The Imperial Age, then, links us with familiar things. We meet Moses and Aaron in its opening centuries and Alexander and Appius Claudius in its closing one. Our little survey will stop short at its threshold, contenting itself with recording in some detail the events of the Primitive Age in a certain area, and then sketching in less detail the progress of the Age of Consolidation which followed these. It must limit itself, of course, in space as well as time.

Happenings in Europe and Asia Minor, in Egypt, Palestine and Syria, will be noticed only when they have a direct bearing on the history of our chosen region, which lies eastward of them, and whose geography we shall consider now.

2. *Geography*

Roughly, the area we have chosen lies below the 40th parallel of latitude and above the Tropic of Cancer, and stretches from longitude 40 to longitude 70 or a little further east. In other words, it embraces the modern kingdoms of el-'Irâq, Persia and Afghanistan, the shores of the Persian Gulf, Baluchistan, and the Indian province of Sindh.¹ It is in this region that archæology has made the most striking progress since the War. Its most important physical feature is the splendid chain of mountains, from 3,000 to 18,000 feet above sea-level, which, starting from Armenia in the north-west, slants downward diagonally as far as the Gulf of Oman, cutting off the low-lying Arabian peninsula from the plateau of Iran (central Persia), and then turns due north along the Indian frontier to join the still higher mountains of the Hindu-Kush. This horseshoe-shaped barrier, lowest at its southernmost point, naturally divides our region into three parts : Sindh, that is, the lower valley of the Indus, Iran and el-'Irâq.

Sindh, the easternmost of our three divisions, has an area of 53,898 sq. miles and a present-day population of about

¹ See Map I.

three-and-a-half millions. The Indus, which is at this point a very rapid stream, traverses it from north to south, and cotton, millet and wheat grow on its banks. Elsewhere, as in so many eastern lands, the soil is barren for want of water. Sindh is bounded on the east by the great Thar Desert and on the North by the Panjâb or 'Five Streams', the huge fertile plain formed by the upper Indus and its tributaries, all of which take their rise from the Himâlayas. Roughly speaking, the area of Sindh and the Panjâb together is approximate to that of Great Britain. These two districts may be called the gateway of India, for it is through them that the invader, Āryan, Greek or Muslim, has always entered. The mountain-barrier of which we have spoken is no such obstacle as are the Himâlayas and their spurs, which make it impossible that India should ever be invaded from the north or east. It is to the Indus Valley, then, that we may look for the earliest traces of connection between India and the rest of the world.

Our next division is the Persian steppe, Iran,¹ separated from India by the Afghan and Baluchi hills. The plateau of Iran is split by another and lesser chain of hills, running roughly from north to south, into two unequal parts: the arid Afghan plain and the Persian uplands proper, which lie between the mountain barrier and the Caspian. Inner Persia cannot be called a fertile land. Its rainfall is slight, it has no great rivers, and there are two actual deserts: the great salt wilderness, Dasht-i-Kevîr, in the north and the smaller Dasht-i-Lut in the east. Drouth is its curse. The high plains provide grazing for sheep, goats, camels and horses. As one proceeds westward in the general direction of Armenia and el-'Irâq, soil and climate grow kinder and the cultivation of wheat, cotton, flax and (in the south) dates and rice assume the proportion of important industries: but to this day, a very large percentage of the native population are nomad herdsmen, almost as poor and unsettled as the Arabian Badûw. Persia, moreover, is a country of climatic extremes. In the south-east, even in spring, the heat is merciless, yet the winter, especially in the uplands, is severe and roads are often closed for months by snowdrifts.

¹ This is now the official name of the kingdom.

GEOGRAPHY

Before going on to examine the last and most important of the three parts into which the mountain-barrier divides our area, it will be as well for us just to glance at the narrow strip of coastland lying at the foot of the mountains and extending from the mouths of the Indus to the Shatt-el-'Arâb, the tidal estuary of the rivers Euphrates, Tigris and Karûn. For most of its length, this coast is poor and barren, though dates are grown at some points on it. Starting from the Indus, we have first the seaboard of Baluchistan—a territory which extends inland through the mountains to the Afghan border, the home chiefly of nomad tribes with an ugly reputation for banditry and murder. Adjoining this on the west are the Persian provinces of Karman and Fars, which are mountainous but slightly more fertile, and finally, just at the mouth of the Shatt-el-'Arâb, the very important coastal plain of Khûzistan. This plain is alluvial, having been formed in the course of ages by silt carried down by the Karûn river and its tributaries from the Bakhtiari Hills—a fantastically-shaped limestone range beneath which lies the great wealth of oil now tapped by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co. Its climate is hot, but, thanks to the Karûn, Karkhah, Diz, Saimâri and lesser rivers, the soil is fertile and rice, date-palms, grain and cotton flourish. It is a strange and not unattractive country : a kind of compromise between the mountain-barrier and the great alluvial plain of el-'Irâq. In a sense, it belongs more to the latter than to Persia, but, as we shall see in a later chapter, its history has been more Persian than Babylonian.

The third and by far the most interesting region has now to be described : the kingdom of el-'Irâq or Greater Mesopotamia, which—with an area about equal to that of Great Britain and a present-day population of well under 3,000,000—has exercised a greater influence on the early history of mankind than any other country except Egypt. El-'Irâq (the name is Arabic and means ' the Cliff', ' the Edge') is a strip of land, watered by the two great rivers Tigris and Euphrates, which runs along the western foot of the mountain-barrier and separates it from the peninsula of Syria-Arabia. Some 20,000 years ago, this separation was even completer than it is to-day, for the Persian Gulf then reached inland about 300 miles

further than at present, the Tigris and Euphrates emptying their waters into it above where Baghdâd now stands. As with the Karûn, already mentioned, these waters are so heavily charged with silt that they have gradually choked up the ancient Gulf, turning it first into marsh and later into an absolutely flat, featureless and stoneless alluvial plain, the Plain of Shinar or Babylonia.¹ Both the rivers have their source in the high mountains of Armenia. Descending thence, the more easterly of the two, the Tigris, skirts close to the foothills of the mountain-barrier, from which it receives several tributaries. The Euphrates, which rises further to the north than the Tigris (only about 120 miles south of the Black Sea), swings out, as soon as it has reached the flat lands, in a vast irregular curve toward the west, coming at one point to within 100 miles of the Mediterranean, and then turning leisurely east toward the course of the Tigris again. From modern Baghdâd down to ancient Babylon, the two rivers run almost parallel and are, on an average, only about 25 miles apart. Below Babylon, they diverge again before finally joining to form the estuary of the Shatt-el-'Arâb, on which the modern port of Basrah stands.

In describing the lands through which the rivers run, it will be best for us to keep to the course we have followed so far and proceed from east to west—or more accurately, from south-east to north-west. At the head of the Shatt-el-'Arâb, just above Basrah, there is a large stretch of almost impenetrable swamp, the home of the 'Marsh Arabs', who wade naked in its shallow lagoons and, astonishing though it will seem, feed their cattle largely on dried fish! Just at the head of this morass, the Euphrates is joined by the Shatt-el-Hayy, or Snake River, really an arm of the Tigris which leaves the parent stream at Kut-el-Amârah and flows due south across the plain.

Above the juncture of these two, Babylonia proper begins. As we have seen, this is a dead-flat alluvial plain, bounded on the south-west by the Arabian Desert and on the north-east by the mountain-barrier. Barring some unimportant outcrops of gypsum near the coast, this plain is so completely stoneless

¹ See Map II.

GEOGRAPHY

that if one picks up even a pebble on it, one can be certain that it has been brought there by the hand of man. Where the rivers run or where canals have been dug from them, this stoneless soil is wonderfully fertile. Not only does it yield summer and winter crops of wheat, corn, barley, spelt and sesame, but the scorching south wind that turns Babylonia into an inferno during the late summer ripens the fruit of the date-palm and makes date-growing a staple industry. A palm-grove on the Euphrates can be a delightful spot, with the noble trees set out in lines, their big leaves patterning the ground with sun and shade, and lesser fruits—figs, pomegranates, mulberries and melons—planted between them. Out of reach of the rivers and their canals, the scene is very different. The soil, so rich when watered, has been baked by perpetual sun into drab yellow-grey sand over which the mirage flashes blindingly. The average annual rainfall of the Babylonian plain is six inches, so that where there is no irrigation there can be no life. A single day spent in this outer desolation would make it plain to the most thick-headed traveller why the Kings of Sumer boasted as haughtily in their memorials of having dug a canal as of having conquered an enemy. Water is the life of the land.

Babylonia then (where irrigated) is a country rich in food but in absolutely nothing else. The rivers provide clay for the potter and brickmaker, good reeds for building huts and skiffs and weaving mats and baskets. Pitch or bitumen, used for a variety of purposes, is got from the town of Hit on the middle Euphrates. Every other necessity of life, without exception, must be imported. The ancients got their stone from Assyria and Arabia, their timber from the Lebanon and the Amanus, their gold, silver and lead from Asia Minor and their copper from Arabia and Persia. Of necessity, the people of Babylonia have been tradesmen and travellers from the first.

Above Baghdâd, the character of the country changes, and in two ways which we may study separately. We are out of the alluvium now, and on higher stony ground. East of the Tigris, between it and the mountains of Kurdistan, lies the land of Assyria where, within an area about equal to that

of Wales, three tributaries join the main stream : the Udhaim, about 35 miles north of Baghdâd, and the Lower and Upper Zab between modern Kirkûk and ancient Nineveh. A fourth stream, the Diyâleh, flows through Assyria but reaches the Tigris below Baghdâd. Save in the worst of summer, this well-watered country is among the pleasantest in the world. Along the foot-hills from the Diyâleh northwards, and between the Zabs, the land is rolling and down-like, with a rich pinkish soil reminding one of Devonshire. Good winter crops of wheat and barley grow here, as well as grapes, olives, apricots and garden-truck : but in the absence of the hot summer winds of Babylonia, dates cannot be grown.

East of Assyria rise the splendid hills of Kurdistan, steep and imposing, with snowy tops and wooded sides. Westward, once we have crossed the Tigris, we are in Mesopotamia proper, the 'land between the rivers', *i.e.* the country about as big as Scotland (bigger, if we include the part of it that lies outside the frontier of the modern kingdom of el-'Irâq) between the Tigris and the great curve of the Upper Euphrates. This is a high steppe or prairie whose meagre rainfall and stony soil, though they produce a blaze of wild-flowers in the spring, support no crops. There is a low range of hills along its midst, and two streams—the Khabûr and the Balikh—have their rise in it and flow to the Euphrates. Along their courses, and on the Euphrates itself, agriculture and settled habitation are possible ; but the greater part of Mesopotamia proper is inhabited only by Badûw of the Shammar Tribe who pitch their black tents and pasture their flocks and camels there. West of the Euphrates again, the still more barren sandy wilderness of the Syrian Desert stretches almost to the Lebanons.

Such is el-'Irâq, essentially a land of contrasts : of contrast between the marvellous fertility of its watered, and the dreadful desolation of its unwatered areas, between the stoneless and almost treeless flatness of Babylonia and the bold hilly scenery of Assyria, between the excellent richness of its food-supply, and its complete poverty in all other resources. As it is a country of contrasts, so it is likewise a country of encounters, a debatable land. West of it lie the Syrian and Arabian deserts, the home, since time immemorial, of nomads who,

GEOGRAPHY

once they have found arable land to settle in, often develop a high talent for government and organization. North-east are the highlands, populated by hardy and predatory mountaineers, always ready to reap where they have not sown. Between them, the natural mixing-ground of highlander and plainsman, lies the fertile and defenceless no-man's-land of el-'Irâq, an alchemist's crucible in which, as we shall see, the repeated mingling of elements engendered the Philosopher's Stone of a great civilization.

We have now surveyed in detail the physical nature of the stage on which some of the most important early scenes of the human drama were played out. We have seen that it consists of a central highland plateau enclosed in a ring of mountains, having the sea along its southward foot and, to its east and west, a hot but fertile plain fed by great rivers, which two plains are bounded on their further sides by deserts. In reading the description given in the last few pages, one question must certainly have occurred to the student : How came it that a region subject to such fierce extremes of heat and cold, scarred with so many wildernesses that are almost incapable of supporting human life, and crossed by such formidable obstacles to communication, was one of the first homes of civilized man ? Why did civilization develop earlier in this difficult country than in, say, the kinder regions along the north coast of Africa or at the foot of the Himâlayas ?

Three answers can be given. In the first place, it is now recognized that in early times (how early is for the geologist rather than the archæologist to say) the rainfall over a large part of our area (especially the Iranian Plateau) was heavier than to-day. Indeed, the increasing drouth of which we have evidence during the prehistoric period certainly exercised a great influence on the movements of the early peoples. Again, game-animals, such as wild sheep, cattle and swine, ibex, various kinds of deer and wildfowl were, and to a lesser degree still are, common over the whole area ; and primitive man was a hunter before he was an agriculturist. A third reason for the attraction which this region had for its first occupants was that the soil of the two great river-systems, once watered, is incomparably more productive than that of the agricultural

THE MIDDLE EAST

districts of Europe and North America. The deep ploughing and the manuring so familiar to the western farmer are unknown in el-'Irâq. The Arab's ploughshare is often only a piece of hardened wood which barely scratches the surface of the ground ; but no more is needed. Given only the indispensable water-supply, the fields of the middle East will bring forth abundantly almost of their own accord ; so that we need not be astonished to find some of the earliest agriculturalists settled on them.

3. *Archæological methods*

Leaving the geography of the middle East, we may allow ourselves a glance at the way in which our knowledge of its early history has been acquired. Scattered over the whole of the lowland plains, especially in Babylonia and Assyria, the traveller will find many curious mounds or groups of mounds, varying in shape and size, which are shown by the brickbats, potsherds and whatnot strewn about them to conceal ancient ruins. Two notable *tells* (as these mounds are called in Arabic), one near Hillah in Babylonia and the other near Môsul in Assyria, have always been pointed to by Arab and Jewish tradition as the sites of Babylon and Nineveh. Travellers visiting these in the XVIII and early XIX centuries were much interested by the burnt bricks, fragments of terracotta and unbaked clay tablets which they found covered with a mysterious writing akin to that in which inscriptions were carved on certain ancient Persian monuments. To this writing, the name *cuneiform* (Latin *cuneus*, 'a wedge') was given, because the many hundreds of characters which it employed were all formed by various combinations of wedge-shaped strokes, which had evidently been made by pressing a sharp instrument into the clay whilst it was still soft.

What the inscriptions meant, or in what language they were written, no one had the faintest idea, though German, French and Scandinavian scholars had been able to puzzle out the sound-values of one or two characters in the Persian script, which is far simpler than the Babylonian. But in 1835, Col.

ARCHÆOLOGICAL METHODS

(later Sir) Henry Rawlinson, an officer in the forces of the Honourable East India Company, a brilliant scholar and a brave soldier, managed, under circumstances of almost incredible difficulty and danger, to reach and copy the famous rock-inscription on the face of the precipice of Bisotûn or Bihistûn, near Kirmanshah in Persia. This inscription was in three different kinds of cuneiform, Old Persian, Susian and Babylonian. Aided by the attempts of earlier scholars and by his own knowledge of Oriental languages, he was able to translate the whole of the Old Persian text and, with the collaboration of the Rev. Edward Hincks and Mr. Edwin Norris, to work the Babylonian and Susian versions out from it. At about the same time that these three were announcing their discoveries, an Italian, Paolo Botta, the French consular agent at Môsul, was making discoveries of an equally important but quite different kind. Attracted by the numerous *tells*, or ruin-mounds, in his district, he set workmen to dig in some at a place called Khorsabad, where they promptly uncovered the ruins of extensive brick buildings wonderfully decorated with sculptured and inscribed stone slabs and colossal stone images. He had stumbled, though he did not know it, upon no less a place than the royal palace of one of the greatest Assyrian kings, Sargon II (721-705 B.C.). His work was at once subsidized by the French Government, and the superb sculptures of Khorsabad are now in the Louvre. Three years later, that great English traveller, Sir Austen Henry Layard—one of the most romantic figures of the early XIX century—began digging in the Assyrian ruin of Nimrûd (the Calah of the Old Testament) where he soon uncovered splendid palaces, the bas-reliefs and colossi from which can be seen in the British Museum.

Meanwhile, the work of Rawlinson, Hincks and Norris on the Bihistûn Inscription had been carried to a point where definite conclusions could be drawn. These conclusions were : (1) The inscription was carved by the famous Persian king, Darius the Great (521-485 B.C.), and recorded his genealogy and victories. (2) The three languages it used were in no way related to each other. (3) Of the three varieties of cuneiform writing, the Babylonian was the oldest and most com-

plicated, and the other two were derived from it. (4) The ancient Babylonian language was a *Semitic* one, closely akin to Hebrew and Arabic. (5) The Assyrian inscriptions found by Botta and Layard were in a language and writing almost identical with Babylonian, so that they, too, could now be translated.

This was one of the most epoch-making discoveries in the history of Oriental research. When it was found that the Assyrian inscriptions told the history of such kings as Sennacherib and Tiglath-Pileser, whose names every Bible-reader knew, and actually mentioned certain kings of Israel and Judah, as Jehu, Omri and Hezekiah, the general public became as enthusiastic as the scholars. It is to Edward Hincks that we must give the credit for having been the first to point out that the Semitic-speaking Babylonians could not have been the original inventors of cuneiform writing, but must have borrowed it from some older race, whom a great Continental scholar, Jules Oppert, presently identified as the *Sumerians*.

To-day, we know that the Babylonians and their cousins the Assyrians were, archæologically speaking, late-comers in el-'Irâq, and that it was not merely their writing, but almost the whole of their culture, literature and religion that they took over from the older, non-Semitic Sumerians—that astonishing nation who were already settled in Babylonia as early as 3000 B.C. But before going on to discuss this, we must look a little further into the history of 'Irâqi excavation.

The work of Layard in Assyria does not really concern us here, for the wonderful remains that he discovered were of what we have agreed to call the Imperial Age (after 1600 B.C.) More to our purpose are the trial diggings made by Taylor, another Englishman, in 1855, at two sites in the plain of Babylonia, Tell-Abu-Shahrên, the ancient Sumerian city of *Eridu*, and its next neighbour, Tell-el-Mugheir, which he correctly identified as *Ur of the Chaldees*. These cities had already been explored, but not identified, by one of Layard's helpers, W. K. Loftus, who had also done some work at Nuffar and Senqereh, the sites of the Sumerian cities *Nippur* and *Larsam*; and at Warka, the ancient *Uruk*, the chief city of the Sumerians, had found part of an extraordinary building whose

walls were decorated with inlay-work and which—had he but known it—belonged to a very early period of Sumerian history. These excavations attracted little interest at the time. Owing to the absence of stone which we have already noted, the Babylonian *tells* did not yield spectacular finds of sculpture like those of Assyria. Oppert's theory that the Sumerians had been in el-'Irâq before the Babylonians and Assyrians was not yet accepted by all the authorities ; and there was nothing to show that the ruins of Uruk, Ur, Nippur and the rest really contained relics of a vastly more remote antiquity than did the palaces of Calah and Nineveh.

So things remained until, one day in 1874, some Arabs of the Muntefiq Tribe informed the newly-appointed French consul at Basrah that stone statues were to be found at a place called Tell-Loh on the Shatt-el-Hayy. The consul, Ernest de Sarzec, hurried to the spot and began a campaign of excavation which has been carried on by the French Government ever since and to which, more than to any other excavations—recent work at Ur and Uruk not excepted—we owe our present familiarity with the art, history and language of the Sumerians. The ancient name of Tell-Loh was *Lagash* (formerly misread as *Shirpurla*, in which form it appears in old text-books) and as it was abandoned before the Sumerians were finally absorbed by the Babylonians, it contains only Sumerian antiquities. Splendid sculptures, some of them as old as about 2800 B.C., and a priceless series of early historical inscriptions have been found there. Ten years after de Sarzec had started work, a German expedition explored some important Sumerian sites but did not excavate them thoroughly. The great work of the Germans before the War was the patient and scientific excavation of Babylon, by Koldewey, and of *Ashur*, the earliest capital of Assyria, where many Sumerian remains were found, by Andræ and others—work which is a splendid and lasting monument to German archæological method.

America was later in the field, but when she began it was on a characteristically heroic scale. The University Museum of Pennsylvania sent out a Mission to reconnoitre the country in 1884 ; and in 1889 work was begun on the site of the ancient sacred city of *Nippur* by Haynes, Peters, Meyer and

others under the general direction of H. Hilprecht. Nippur is one of the most inaccessible sites in Babylonia and the expedition had to work under circumstances of discomfort and actual danger. Nevertheless, not only was the temple of the Wind-God, the holiest centre of pilgrimage in ancient Sumer, excavated, but a superb collection of *more than 50,000* cuneiform inscriptions of all periods, including historical records of enormous value, was obtained. In 1903, E. J. Banks, U.S. consul at Baghdâd, did some digging at Bismâya, the ancient *Adab*, near Nippur, on behalf of the University of Chicago.

The discoveries made since the War will be discussed pretty fully in later chapters. The two great features of post-War excavation have been the perfecting of scientific methods and the co-operation of England and America in the field, which has led to most important results. As early as 1918, the distinguished Assyriologist, R. Campbell Thompson, then on the Intelligence Staff of the British Expeditionary Force in el-'Irâq, began to dig at Eridu (Tell-Abu-Shahrên) on behalf of the British Museum, where he made a discovery of supreme importance which will be mentioned in the next chapter. He was succeeded by Dr. H. R. Hall, who also began the famous excavations at Ur and the neighbouring site of *Tell-el-'Ubeid*, of which more anon. Finally, in 1922, the *Joint Expedition of the British Museum and the University Museum of Pennsylvania* (Field-Director, Sir C. L. Woolley) took over the work, with results that everybody knows. Next year, a second Anglo-American expedition, under the general direction of Prof. Langdon, began digging at *Kish*—a Sumerian city second only to Uruk in importance—on behalf of the University of Oxford and the Field Museum of Chicago. Five years later, Uruk itself at last received the attention it deserved, when a German mission under Dr. Julius Jordan (afterwards Inspector of Antiquities to the 'Irâqi Government) started work there. Meanwhile, thanks to the efforts of that great woman, the late Miss Gertrude Lowthian Bell, the 'Irâq Museum in Bridge Street, Baghdâd, had been founded to house the antiquities claimed by the Government from the various excavations. In 1929, the French Government resumed work at Lagash—the British Museum had taken up the "burden of Nineveh"

ARCHÆOLOGICAL METHODS

again two years before. Finally, in 1930, the Oriental Institute of Chicago, which had been doing important work throughout the East, sent out a particularly well-equipped expedition, headed by two expert archæologists, Henri Frankfort and Conrad Preusser, to dig the mounds of Tell Asmar (the ancient *Eshnunna*) and Khafāja. The work on these sites has already thrown a flood of light on the early history of the Sumerians.

The story of excavation in el-'Irâq has been dwelt on at length because this is, from an archæological point of view, the key-district of our whole area, and it is most important that the reader should have some idea of the way in which the information which will presently be put before him was obtained. The drawing of definite conclusions from excavation is an exceedingly complex and difficult matter. In the *upper* (that is, of course, the *later*) layers of a *tell*, one generally has written records to help one. It is when one has dug down into the lowermost layers, belonging to a time before writing was invented, that one's troubles really begin. Here, everything depends on, and all one's conclusions must be drawn from, the style and nature of the material objects that one finds, and especially the pottery. This, since it is cheap, easy to make and used for all sorts of purposes, is common on every site. Since it is fragile and difficult to transport, one can generally be sure that it was made on the spot where one finds it and not brought from outside. Moreover, "potter's clay" being proverbially easy to manipulate, pottery can be produced in a great variety of styles; and experience has shown that these never repeat themselves—once a style has gone out of fashion it is finished for good—so that it is often possible to date a ruin simply by the pottery it contains. Finally, supposing that, at a certain point in one's excavations, one finds a sudden 'break' in the character of the remains—the pots, weapons, ornaments and whatnot found *below* a given level being all of one kind, while *above* that level new forms suddenly appear, mingling with and finally superseding the old ones—one immediately casts about to find whether pottery of the same sort as that which intrudes here has been found in any other part of the world. If it has, then one is justified in suggesting

THE MIDDLE EAST

that people from the region where it has been found came into one's own region and settled there. The reader will hear more of this (as also of excavations carried on in other parts of our area) in the next chapter.

4. *The Sumerians*

Before we consider the *earliest* remains of civilized man which have been excavated in the middle East—before, in fact, we ‘begin at the beginning’—we shall have to look a little more closely at the *chief*, the central civilization of the whole area, which is that of the Sumerians of el-‘Irâq. The great question of post-War archæology is : When did this people arrive in Babylonia, and where from ? We do not know. All that we can say for certain is that as early as 3000 B.C., they were firmly established there ; that at that remote date they already had a settled and distinctive culture, religion and social organization, as well as a command of arts and handiwork, which argues a long previous history ; that, in a word, their civilization was already *mature*. Excavations carried right down to virgin soil (as by the Americans at Nippur, English and Americans at Ur and Kish, English at Nineveh and Germans at Uruk and Shuruppak) have proved beyond question that, in even earlier times, several successive races, each with its own culture, settled one after another in el-‘Irâq : but which of these was the Sumerian ? Various answers have been proposed to that question ; but none of them is thoroughly convincing.

Just as distinctive, and just as difficult to trace back to its origins, is the Sumerian language, which is a standard puzzle to philologists, for it is not precisely like any other language on earth. Broadly speaking, it belongs to the group known as *agglutinative*. That is to say, it expresses grammatical modifications by means of different monosyllables placed before or after the root, for example : *e* = ‘ house ’, *e-mu* = ‘ my house ’, *e-mu-ta* = ‘ from my house ’, *e-bi* = ‘ this house ’, *e-bi e-mu-am* = ‘ this house is my house ’. The verb is highly complicated and employs a great number of different moods or voices

THE SUMERIANS

expressing distinctions of meaning which are not clear to us to-day. The roots, both of nouns and verbs, are nearly—but not quite—all monosyllabic, as in Chinese; and some authorities consider that—as is also the case with Chinese—the spoken language may have made use of several different musical ‘tones’. Obviously, it was a language capable of expressing very subtle nuances of thought; but on the other hand, it often appears to us extraordinarily clumsy. There is, for example, no distinction of gender, and whilst the verb possesses distinctions of number, person and tense, these were often omitted in writing, though the mysterious distinctions of mood are always observed. To make matters worse, several consonants are weak and are generally dropped before another consonant or at the end of a word, with rather confusing results. The student, then, need not be surprised when he finds even the leading authorities disagreeing over the exact translation of a passage, though its general sense will nearly always be quite clear.

The writing of the Sumerians was fully as complicated as their language. Cuneiform is a script of mixed kind, partly *syllabic* and partly *ideographic*. That is, it sometimes uses signs which stand for single *syllables* and sometimes signs standing for whole *words*. Moreover, the 330 or so signs which were in common use are almost all *polyphonic*. In other words, they have more than one meaning. For example, a certain sign has the *syllabic* values KA, DUG, and GU, and this same sign is also used as an *ideograph* for the word INIM (= ‘command’). Another sign has the syllabic values MASH, BAR; but written twice over and preceded by the sign which is always placed in front of the names of gods, it stands for the god NERGAL. More confusing still are the many *compound ideographs*, consisting of two or more signs which, when written together, are not read according to their individual values but are treated as an ideograph for some other word. Thus, *Urim* (the Sumerian name for the city of Ur) is not written U-RI-IM, as one would expect, but SHESH-AB! The word for ‘prince’, ‘governor’, is written PA-TE-SI but must be pronounced ISAG; and so forth. Obviously, the correct reading of a sign or group of signs can only be decided by its context; and mis-

readings are bound to occur, especially in the case of proper names. This explains the fact—so confusing and irritating to the beginner—that the same name often appears in widely different transliterations in the pages of different authors. The very important early ruler referred to in this little work as Eannatum, *isag* of Lagash, will be found in older text-books under the guise of 'Eannadu *patesi* of Shirpurla'. Ur-Nammu, founder of the mighty Third Dynasty of Ur, was spoken of until recently as 'Ur-Engur', whilst there is still doubt as to whether his son's name should be read as 'Shulgi' or 'Dungi'.

Cuneiform began as picture-writing, but the soft clay which was the Babylonian substitute for paper or parchment is a poor medium for drawing, and the early pictographs were soon reduced to formal patterns of wedge-shaped strokes—*musmáry*, 'nail-writing', as the modern Arab calls them. Whether the original picture-writing was invented by the Sumerians or borrowed by them from some other people, one cannot be sure. It is generally assumed that they invented it; but there is something to be said for the other theory. As we have seen, the culture of el-'Irâq has always been a mixed one, and it is often difficult to assign its various elements to their true origins. Indeed, it is far from impossible that even the language of the Sumerians is mixed. Different scholars have compared it, more or less convincingly, with Turkish, Georgian, Basque, Chinese, Korean, Tamil, Bantu and the Polynesian dialects; and perhaps the real explanation of its ambiguous position among human tongues is that it is a fusion of two different languages. On archæological and anthropological grounds, at any rate, nothing would be more probable.

The language and writing of the Sumerians, then, afford no clue as to their origin and their own early traditions are not much more helpful. As a result of the wide publicity given to the discoveries at Ur, most people know that they possessed a legend of the Flood, from which the Biblical story of Noah seems to have been borrowed. The possible historical basis of that legend we will discuss in the next chapter. At the moment, it is enough to quote the opening sentences of the famous (and misleading) list of Sumerian kings which was

THE SUMERIANS

compiled by one Nur-Ninsubur in about the year 1984 B.C. and which is now in the Ashmolean Museum :

When kingship came down from heaven, the kingship was at Eridu. At Eridu, Alulim was king. He ruled 28800 years. Alalgar ruled 36000 years. Two kings ruled 64800 years. Eridu was overthrown. Its kingship was removed to Bad-Tibira, where three kings (one of them a god) ruled for 108000 years. Larak, Sippar and Shuruppak followed with one king each. Five cities, eight kings : they had ruled 241200 years when the Flood came. After the Flood had come, when kingship came down from heaven (again), the kingship was at Kish. Leaving aside the more than patriarchal ages assigned to these kings, it is evident that the Sumerians believed that their nation and institutions had been established, and some of their chief cities founded, a long while before the Flood.

Another legend, however, of which we have only a mutilated text, states that before the Flood Mankind dwelt in the land of Dilmun, which is pretty certainly the east coast of the Persian Gulf along with the island of Bahrên. This was the Sumerian Garden of Eden. The earth-god Enki ruled there in person. Sickness, old age, lust, injustice and evil omens were unknown. *The lion did not maul : the hyena did not snatch away the lamb.* But mankind failed to do honour to Enki so, despite the pleas of his wife Ninharsag, he destroyed them by a deluge, all save one Tagtug whom Ninharsag rescued. These two stories flatly contradict each other, one bringing mankind (by whom, of course, the Sumerians meant themselves) into Babylonia from the Gulf coast *after* the Flood, the other establishing them there long *before* it. Yet a third legend speaks of a time when men were so uncivilized that they went about on all fours cropping herbs and drinking ditch-water like cattle. The present writer is tempted to explain these contradictions, as he would explain others, on the ground of an early mixture of races.

The Sumerians are usually supposed to have entered Babylonia from the east, and there is sound evidence for this. Their word for 'east', 'mountain', and 'country' is the same (*kur*). Further, they conceived their gods to dwell on mountains, and so indispensable a part was played in their

THE MIDDLE EAST

worship by ' high places ' that, on the level Babylonian plain, they were forced to provide their temples with *artificial mountains*, solid masses of brickwork as much as 70 ft. high, arranged in terraces of decreasing size and crowned with shrines in which the gods were believed actually to live. These *ziggurats*, as they were called, are the originals of the Scriptural Tower of Babel (which in Hebrew means ' Tower of Babylon '), the tower reaching heaven ; and taken in conjunction with the fact that the earliest Sumerian buildings make much more use of stone than do the later ones, they very strongly suggest that the first home of the Sumerians was somewhere among the rocky uplands of the Iranian Plateau.

The above is almost all that can be said with certainty concerning the origin of the Sumerians. The lucky archæologist who first discovers traces of them anywhere outside of Babylonia (and in the opinion of the present writer, the country lying between the Caspian and the Black Sea might be a promising region in which to begin the search) will take his place along with Evans, Mariette, Botta and Schliemann, as the opener of a new and fascinating chapter of history.

CHAPTER II

THE AGE OF PAINTED POTTERY

1. *Susa and el-'Ubeid*

Except for a few primitive flints, the oldest remains found in our area are those of a people who were in the stage of development technically called the *chalcolithic* culture,—that is, who had already learnt to use copper and gold as well as stone, to make pottery, build houses, weave cloth and till the ground. These remains, lying beneath those of later and more advanced civilizations, are found always upon virgin soil. Though differing so much from place to place that they cannot all be the products of the same age and the same people, they do, as a whole, give one the impression that the several chalcolithic civilizations of the middle East may very well have had a common (and unknown) origin in the remote past. This is true in particular of the pottery.

The immense importance of pottery as archæological evidence was briefly explained in the last chapter. The reader should bear in mind, however, that pottery *alone* is never used by the serious historian as a means of deciding the connections of one branch of early civilization with another. When we speak of the 'Red Pottery Culture' superseding the 'Painted Pottery Culture of the Highlands', or the like, we do not mean simply that man gave up making pottery in one way and began making it in another—that would be altogether unimportant—but that a whole set of new ways of making and doing things was suddenly introduced into a place where a different and simpler set of ways was in vogue before, and that the two different kinds of pottery are typical of the two different ways of doing things. Pottery-styles, in fact, are convenient labels, or rather indicators, because they are, among

ancient peoples, the first thing to be affected by any general change in the mode of life of their makers.

It was in the year 1891 that the famous French archæologist J. de Morgan, whose work in Egypt had already gained him a considerable reputation, visited the ruins of Susa, 'Shushan the king's palace' (mod. Shush), which lie just at the foot of the Bakhtiâri Hills, in that Persian province of Khûzistan mentioned in the last chapter. Those four gigantic mounds, covering an area of about 300 acres, which tower out of the flat Persian plain almost like natural mountains and completely dwarf the modern village at their feet, had been explored previously and important remains of the V century B.C. recovered from them. But de Morgan's trained eye was at once caught by certain flints, and sherds of pottery, handsomely decorated with black paint which had been washed by rain out of the lowest slopes of the chief mound and which were obviously older by far than anything previously recovered there. On his return to France he urged the importance of carrying out further excavations at this site and, in 1891, the French Government having purchased from the Shah the sole right to dig for antiquities in Persian soil (a monopoly which has only recently been ended), the *Délégation Française en Perse*, probably the most important archæological expedition that has ever left Europe, began work under de Morgan's direction. The digging continued until the War and has since been resumed by M. de Mecquenem, of whose hospitality at Susa the author of this text-book has the most grateful recollections.

The excavations of de Morgan showed that the great main *tell* of Susa, nowadays a mound nearly 100 ft. high, had been, before the *débris* of human habitations began to accumulate on it, a natural hillock less than 30 feet in height, standing in a marsh. Upon this bluff the earliest inhabitants of S. Persia, the founders of the city of Susa, had installed themselves, building a village of mud of which no trace remains to-day save for the earthen rampart which surrounded it. Outside this rampart, however, they buried their dead, and from the 2,000 graves opened by the *Délégation* a huge quantity of specimens of their handiwork has been obtained. Like all

other primitive people, they considered it necessary—whether from affection or from fear lest unquiet ghosts should come to trouble them—to provide each corpse with pottery vessels from which the shade might eat and drink in the hereafter, with tools and weapons for its use and necklaces for its adornment.

The weapons consisted primarily of stone-headed clubs or maces, and copper-headed tomahawks. Very similar clubs (but with heads made of hardened asphalt instead of limestone) are carried by desert Arabs in el-'Irâq to-day. The axes were of the most primitive type, being in fact simply imitations in pure copper (*not* bronze) of stone axes. Evidently, they were valuable property, for before being laid in the grave they were carefully wrapped in cloth to preserve them from the soil ; and for this the modern archæologist returns thanks, since the oxydization of the copper has saved a few fragments of cloth from decay. These have been examined by experts who have confessed with amazement that the prehistoric savages of Susa were able to produce linen almost as fine as the very best that we possess to-day. Another surprising example of their ingenuity is the fact that they had discovered the reflecting capacity of polished metal. Copper mirrors, not altogether dissimilar to the bronze mirrors used in Japan until quite recently, were almost as common as the axes, so that two of humanity's universal and overmastering instincts—vanity and pugnacity—are witnessed to from the beginning. The former was also responsible for the presence, in many of the graves, of beads of black and white local limestone or imported turquoise ; but it cannot be held answerable for another startlingly modern habit of this ancient race—that of 'making up' their faces. Many of the graves yielded little conical vases that had once contained a green mineral paint which, by analogy with finds from ancient Egypt, must have been used for colouring the eyelids. The motive, though, was hardly vanity. Not only would such paint protect the eyes from the merciless glare of summer and from the insects which are such a terrible source of eye-disease in the East to-day, but modern scientists incline to think that, among many ancient peoples, certain colours (green for water and plants, yellow for the sun, red for blood)

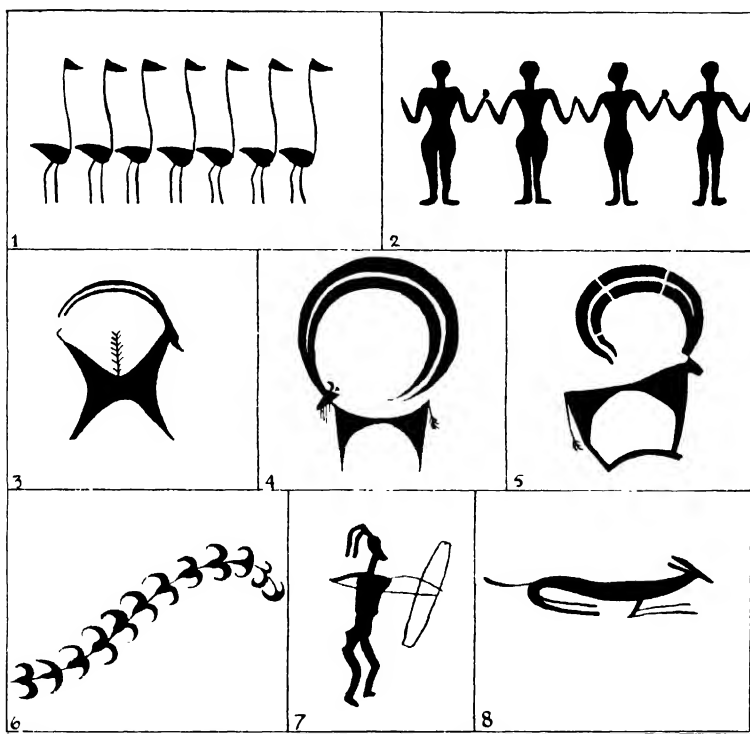
THE AGE OF PAINTED POTTERY

were looked upon as 'life-givers'; that is, they were thought to have a magical power to increase the vitality and strengthen the health of those who wore them.

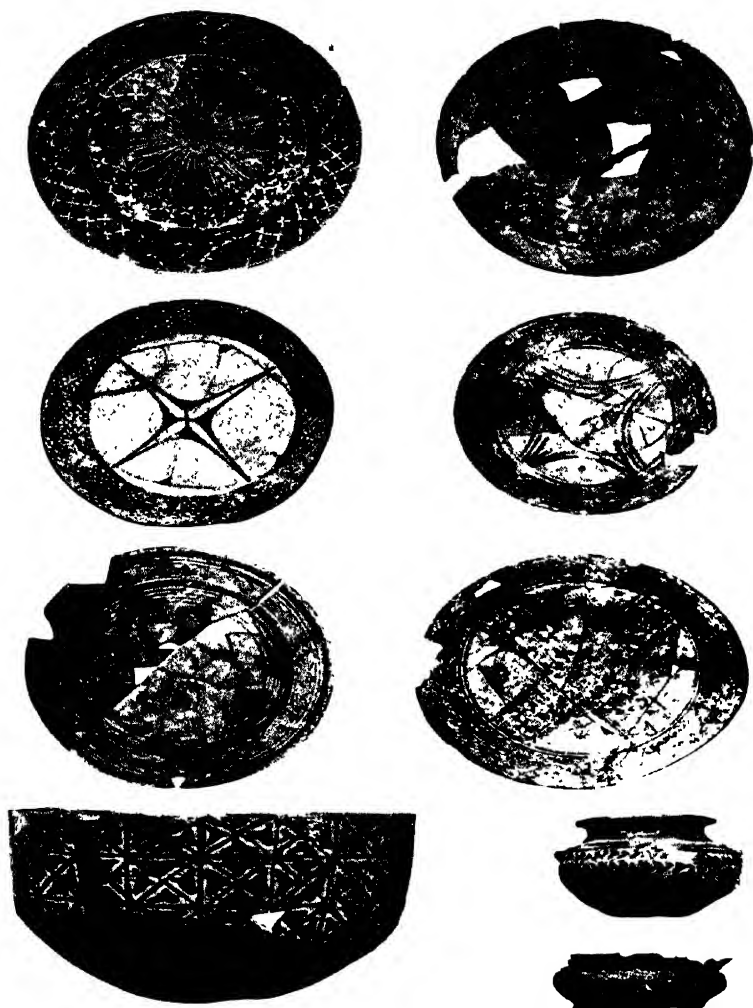
But the most important objects found in the graveyard of Susa were the pots. From three to five of these accompanied each corpse. Four principal shapes were used—a plain open bowl, two kinds of round vases and an extraordinarily graceful tall tumbler. All were of very fine yellowish-white limey clay, lightly fired, and all were painted. The paint used was a manganiferous oxide of iron with an alkaloid flux which, after firing, produced a brilliant glossy black, sometimes with almost a violet tinge. The designs, which are applied to the outside of the vases and tumbler and to the inside and outside of the bowls, are a joy for ever. They are abstract—one might say intellectual—in character, the work of a people who took pleasure in the *idea*, rather than the *reality*, of what they saw. Geometrical elements figure in all the patterns—elaborate and harmonious arrangements of triangles, rectangles, diamonds, zigzags and segmented circles. Curves were avoided as far as possible. Cleverly combined with these entirely abstract forms are pictures—it would be better to say *designs*—of things and creatures, quivers of arrows, tree-branches, men, goats, birds and dogs. These are always arranged so as to harmonize perfectly with the geometrical patterns that accompany them. Indeed, for the ancient artist, these animal-and-plant designs are themselves geometrical. Thus, a goat was represented as two triangles (the fore and hindquarters) with a short curved line for the tail and two great semicircles for the horns. Flying birds are diamonds with curving necks, flanked by two comb-like wings, or even become simply a chain of anchor-shaped markings.

The result is never simply absurd or childish. On the contrary, from a purely decorative point of view it is more successful than any laborious 'copying' of the subject could hope to be. Modern painters who, in the last 30 or 40 years, have been turning more and more in the direction of 'non-representational art'—*i.e.* art which is design rather than reproduction—have been criticized and even abused. If their critics were acquainted with the rudiments of archæology, they

*Conventionalized Designs from Painted Pottery
of the Highland Culture : various sites and periods*



1. Storks. 2. Female Figures. 3. 4. 5. Goats
6. Flight of Birds. 7. Archer. 8. Galloping Dog



PAINED POTTERY AND (BOTTOM RIGHT) FREE BOWL OF THE SYRIAN
CULTURE, FROM ARPACHIEH.

(From 'Prehistoric Syria', by F. A. Rose, A. R. L. A. by permission of the Author.)
(See pp. 11-15)

would know that these 'revolutionary' painters are working in a tradition that is as old as human intelligence itself and that created some of the world's first masterpieces.

Technically, this delightful pottery is remarkable in several ways. The first thing that strikes one is the extraordinary thinness and fragility of the vessels. This, and the fact that they are too porous to hold liquid, is to be explained by the assumption that they were never intended for use but were made specially to be buried with the dead. In the opinion of a most distinguished authority on ancient oriental ceramics, Dr. Frankfort, the shapes and some of the designs indicate that they were originally imitations of *leather* vessels: that is to say, that the people who made them had only recently settled down from a nomadic huntsmen's life in which the hides of slaughtered game had provided the material for their utensils.

One has the impression that the funerary pottery of Susa represents the highest point in the artistic development of a people who had only recently become artists at all; and what we know of their life confirms this. They had learnt to plant corn and to use the bow, but it does not appear that they had any domestic animals save the dog. The goats which are frequently, and the horse which is once, pictured on their vases are pretty certainly wild. They do not seem to have known how to build with bricks, to hammer their copper into swords or daggers or to make vessels of it, or to make statues or statuettes of either stone or clay. On the other hand, they must have engaged to some extent in trade, for neither the turquoises which they wore nor the obsidian (volcanic glass) with which they sometimes tipped their arrows are native to the plain of Khûzistan.

For some time after their discovery, the chalcolithic relics of Susa and other sites in Khûzistan remained unique. Then, in 1903, Mr. Raphael Pumpelly, who had been sent by the Carnegie Institute to conduct geological researches in Russian Turkestan—a desolate country lying east of the Caspian Sea and north of Persia, announced that he had found painted pottery and like matters at a place called *Anau*, some 800 miles north-east of Susa as the crow flies. Here, the remains of three

THE AGE OF PAINTED POTTERY

successive stages of culture, all belonging to the Painted Pottery Period, were to be seen, but (though this was not recognized at the time) all three represent a higher stage of development, and therefore a later date, than do the remains at Susa. Indeed, the two last stages belong to a period when the old civilization of Persia and neighbouring countries had been influenced and altered (as we shall see shortly) by another and quite different civilization which entered our region from the West. Finally, in 1918, Dr. Campbell Thompson undertook excavations, despite the dangerously unsettled state of the country, at the lonely mound of Tell-Abu-Shahrên, the site of the ancient Sumerian city of *Eridu*. Here, he discovered sherds of painted pottery distantly related to that of Susa and much more closely to that found at Bunder Bushire on the Persian coast of the Gulf.

This was the first discovery of chalcolithic remains in Babylonia. The intense archæological activity which sprang up since the War (and which is now in danger of being brought to a standstill by the 'Irâqi Government) soon resulted in the discovery of this early type of painted pottery at many sites in el-'Irâq, whilst a very curious pottery which was found by German excavators before the War at *Samarra*, about 100 miles north of Baghdâd, is now seen to be related to it. There is, in fact, absolute proof that, in the chalcolithic age, the culture of el-'Iraq was simply another branch of the culture of Susa and its neighbours.

The excavations made for the British Museum by the late Dr. Hall, and by the joint Expedition of the British Museum and the University Museum of Pennsylvania under Sir Charles Woolley, at Ur and el-'Ubeid, have enabled us to form as clear a picture of the chalcolithic civilization there as we did of that in Khûzistan. The first impression one receives is that the Babylonian and Assyrian culture was more advanced, and therefore later in date, than the Persian, and this is proved to be the case by the recent discovery at Susa itself of specimens of the coarser 'el-'Ubeid' pottery *overlying* the fine ware of the earliest period. It is evident that this culture developed up to a certain point in Khûzistan and then spread outward into el-'Irâq. To distinguish these two stages of the same

culture, the earlier one, represented by the graveyard at Susa, is called *Susa I*, and the later one, represented by the finds in Babylonia and Assyria and at Bundar Bushire, is called the *el-'Ubeid Culture*, because so much of our knowledge of it comes from the diggings at Tell-el-'Ubeid. The culture of *el-'Ubeid* probably developed directly out of the culture of *Susa I*. Copper was now used more extensively, and a fine barbed copper spearhead of the period has been found at Ur; but stone—even though it had to be imported from a distance into sandy Babylonia—remained the favourite material for knives, axes, hammers, saws, maces, arrowheads and hoes. The dwellings of the poorer folk were simple wattle-and-daub shanties. The more well-to-do built themselves minute houses, some 15 ft. square, of crude mud bricks dried in the sun, a material which has been popular in the East ever since and which is called in Arabic *libn*. These houses had doors of a most peculiar type which was also destined to survive into later times. Instead of being hinged, the leaf of the door was fixed to an upright pole, the upper end of which was held by a ring fastened to the jamb, whilst the lower pivoted, as the door was opened or closed, in a stone socket sunk into the threshold.

Boats were built, for a clay model of one, rather like a Red Indian canoe, was found at el-'Ubeid itself; and no doubt fishing was a staple industry. Corn was grown and the flour ground in stone querns. There is some evidence that sheep were domesticated, which was pretty certainly not the case at Susa.

The pottery of the el-'Ubeid culture is decidedly less attractive than that of *Susa I*. The clay is green or pinkish-yellow and very hard, and the designs are laid on in dull black or, more rarely, light red paint. Representations of animals are rare and have none of the charm of those on the *Susa* vases. There is evidence that the walls of buildings were sometimes decorated with a curious mosaic made of numerous very slender conical pegs or nails of baked clay with different coloured heads, which were driven into the mud brick in regular patterns. This form of decoration also survived into later times and, as will be noted presently, an exquisite and well-preserved example of it has been found at Uruk.

THE AGE OF PAINTED POTTERY

Excavations at Ur have also thrown a faint glimmer of light on the religious beliefs of the early Painted Pottery Age in Babylonia. At Susa, de Morgan had found that the dead—though the objects buried with them showed that they were thought of with respect—were laid very carelessly in the grave, ‘in any position whatever’, he himself reported. In Babylonia, on the contrary, there were rules for the position in which the corpse must lie.¹ It was stretched out flat on its back, the hands crossed on the stomach, in a grave whose floor had been spread with broken sherds of pottery. Vases of offerings were placed at its feet and strings of beads adorned it. Copper weapons were seldom buried, but in several graves there were found extraordinary idols of painted clay representing naked women (sometimes nursing children), with slender, well-modelled bodies but grotesque heads—like those of snakes or lizards—surmounted by odd conical headdresses made of hardened pitch. Probably we have here a very early witness to one of the most venerable and far-spreading religious traditions in the world—the worship of the Mother Goddess who, under a thousand names, as Isis or Ishtar or Aphrodite or Cybele, figures in almost every pagan creed as the giver and sustainer of Life and the reviver of the dead. Her strange reptilian head puts us in mind of the innumerable myths in which a goddess is identified with a snake or dragon. In later times, the Sumerians of Babylonia worshipped Ama-ushumgal-anna, ‘Mother-Dragon-of-Heaven’, and (as in Genesis) a snake was supposed to have stolen the secret of renewed life from men. The monthly miracle by which a snake rubs off his old discoloured skin and becomes fresh and bright again must have made a great impression on primitive man and led him to suppose that this reptile, which seemed able to renew its life at will, was mysteriously connected with the Universal Mother of Life.

The beads which adorned the corpses bear witness to trade-connections so widespread as to be, in that remote age, truly astonishing. It has already been stated that, except for two

¹ But at Uruk a grave of this period was found with the skeleton in a very contorted attitude. This, however, seems to the present writer a case of sacrifice or execution.

unimportant outcrops of soft limestone, there are no minerals in Babylonia. Yet not only did the earliest inhabitants possess flint and copper, not only had they learnt to grind vases and bowls out of hard stone, but the materials with which they made their beads include lapis-lazuli, that exquisite soft blue stone which comes from Central Asia; and amazonite, a stone which is found only in Central India and in Transbaikalia !

Here, we must go carefully. It would be very foolish indeed to assume, on the strength of a few beads, that people from India visited el-'Irâq at this extremely early period, or *vice versa*. It is worth remembering that when Col. Younghusband occupied Lhasa in 1903, being the first white man to penetrate that fastness since the Industrial Revolution, he found among the possessions of the Dalai Lama a bicycle and a gramophone ! Commodities—especially indestructible commodities like stone—can travel enormous distances from hand to hand ; and the amazonite and lapis-lazuli of prehistoric Ur probably passed through the possession of a score of middlemen on their way to el-'Irâq.

This leads us to another set of recent discoveries which has illustrated the lines along which the primitive ' Susa I ' culture spread out from its base, forming long chains of separate communities, all of whom had much the same traditions and degree of civilization, and along whose lines of expansion the trade between East and West must surely have passed. At *Persepolis* (mod. Takht-i-Jamshîd), a city famous in Classical times as the seat of the Great Kings of Persia, which lies more than 300 miles south-east of Susa, Prof. Herzfeld has found beautiful black-painted pottery which must be as old as that from the graveyard of Susa and older than that of el-'Ubeid. Pottery of the same kind has also been found at Karmanshah, in Western Persia, about 150 miles north-east of Baghdâd and more than 400 miles north-west of Persepolis. So that the original home of this important and very ancient civilization was just inside the great horseshoe-shaped chain of hills which we have agreed to call the Mountain Barrier ; comprised, in fact, the whole of Central, West Central and South-eastern Persia, which is an area larger than that of Great Britain.

THE AGE OF PAINTED POTTERY

Accordingly, this culture is generally spoken of nowadays as the Highland Culture, from the place of its origin. In Seistan on the Persian-Afghan frontier, some 700 miles due east of Susa, a district which may be described as a swamp in the middle of a wilderness, typical Highland Culture pottery has been discovered, and in Baluchistan, the desolate region of hills and plains running from the Mountain Barrier down to the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, there is evidence that this culture also obtained a foothold. The Baluchi remains, however, are demonstrably *much later* in date than the Persian and 'Irâqi ones. Later still is the pottery found at Nihawand near Karmanshah, of which splendid specimens can be seen in the British Museum. Finally, we must make mention of the excavations carried out by the Geological Survey of China in the western Chinese province of Kansu, near the Thibetan frontier. Sherds of black-painted ware with geometric designs have been recovered : but the designs are of a very different kind from those of Persia or even Turkestan. The Kansu pottery might conceivably be a very late development of the Highland Culture, but the question lies outside the scope of the present work.

To sum up, then, we have abundant evidence that, in the earliest period of which there is any sure knowledge, the land just within the curve of the Mountain Barrier was occupied by a nation or nations (we have no proof that they were all of the same racial stock) who were already in the chalcolithic stage of culture and whose civilization is characterized by the production of a peculiar type of pottery. We also have proof that this nation, or at least the civilization which it had evolved, spread southward into el-'Irâq at a very early date, northward into Turkestan and possibly even to China (probably at a rather later date), and eastward through Seistan and Baluchistan at a yet later one. That it ever reached India itself is highly unlikely. That in spreading westward it came into contact with different and equally ancient cultures, will be proved in a moment.

A reasonable question which the reader must have asked himself by now is : At what date, how long ago, did all this happen ? To be frank, it is a question to which the cautious

archæologist would much prefer to give no answer. Before the War, it was fashionable to attribute to the Highland Culture an antiquity which can only be characterized as outrageous. The great de Morgan himself dated the Susa graveyard to 12000 B.C., whilst Mr. Pumpelly claimed 9000 B.C. as the date for his earliest discoveries in Turkestan. To-day, it is generally agreed that such almost astronomical figures are quite unreal. The exact date of a culture which possessed no writing, and therefore no real history, can never be decided. By turning to the only part of our chosen area—el-‘Irâq—which possesses a written history going back to early times, we can throw a little light on the matter, but not much. The Sumerians are known to have been settled in Babylonia as early as 3000 B.C. Probably, they had been there for many centuries before that date : but at least a large and important group of definitely Sumerian antiquities can be dated to between 3000 and 3200 B.C. But between the *end* of the Highland Culture and the *beginning* of the early Sumerian period, there existed, one after the other in el-‘Irâq, two definite and distinct phases of civilization, probably inaugurated by two successive waves of foreign settlers, which, between them, can hardly have lasted less than five or six centuries, and probably much longer. The latest phase of the Highland Culture in el-‘Irâq, then, must date to about 3700 B.C. or (more probably) earlier. But we know that this culture lasted a long time in Babylonia, and that even its earliest stages there are later than its beginnings in Persia.

We are making only a modest estimate, then, if we say that the Highland Culture was already in a flourishing condition in Persia—and had been for we don’t know how long—by 4000 B.C. Its late outlying phases in Baluchistan, on the other hand, need not go back before about 2500 B.C. ; and in Western Persia it may have lingered on until the middle of the second millennium B.C.—by which time it had long been superseded and forgotten in el-‘Irâq and Khûzistan.

2. *Prehistoric Assyria*

We have already stated that, in spreading north-westward through el-'Irâq, the Highland Culture met and mingled with another and different culture apparently as ancient as itself. This has been demonstrated by a brilliant discovery made by Mr. M. E. L. Mallowan, excavating on behalf of the Gertrude Bell Memorial School of Archæology at Tell Arpachîyeh, a small mound in Assyria, not far from Nineveh, in 1933. The uppermost layers of this mound yielded the remains of a settlement of the Highland Culture with typical pottery and ruins of little mud-brick houses. The pottery corresponded to the latest phase of el-'Ubeid ware in Babylonia, which proves that the Highland Culture only spread upstream as far as Assyria sometime after its first introduction into el-'Irâq. Graves were found and opened, and a curious difference was revealed between the burial-customs of oldest Assyria and oldest Babylonia. In the south, as we have seen, the body was buried flat on its back ; in Assyria, on the other hand, the grisly practice known technically as *fractional burial* was in force.¹ In other words, the corpse was first exposed to the destructive action of the air and of foul-feeding birds and beasts until dismembered. Then the skull and the main bones were collected and buried with offerings. This habit was probably due to a belief that the soul could only enter the next world after the physical body had entirely decayed. Such a belief is held (or was until recently) by European gypsies. Evidently, the Highland Culture people of Assyria were of different stock from those of Babylonia, or at least professed a different religion.

A more surprising discovery was to follow. Below (and so older than) the remains of the Highland Culture were found the ruins of a very primitive village with houses either of timber (readily obtainable in Assyria) or simple mud, containing graceful and delicate pottery, painted in black, white

¹ Recent work at Susa has shown that this custom was also in use there, but only at the very earliest period.

and a tint varying between red and orange. The favourite designs consisted of circles, rosettes, chequerings and stipplings, and the colour or colours were often applied over a thin coat of creamy-yellow clay technically called a *slip*. Conventionalized pictures of bulls' heads were common, and a sherd now in the British Museum has a fine drawing of a two-headed viper coiled to strike. Painted pottery of this kind could never be mistaken for Highland ware : but precisely similar ware had been found by Baron Max von Oppenheim in a long series of excavations at *Tell Halâf* on the Khabûr River in Upper Mesopotamia, about 140 miles due west of Nineveh, and by Prof. Garstang at Sakjegözü, across the Euphrates in Northern Syria, whilst recent French excavations have revealed its presence at the ancient Syrian port of *Ugarit* (mod. Ras-Shamra) on the Mediterranean coast, about 150 miles north of Beyrût. Evidently, then, at the same time as the Highland Culture flourished in Persia and Babylonia, the *Syrian Culture* (as it is usually called) was spread over Northern Syria and the habitable districts of Mesopotamia proper. Though the two kinds of painted pottery characteristic of these two very early cultures are so different that even an amateur could distinguish them, we are entitled, if we please, to wonder whether both are descended from a common ancestor, and whether both cultures may not be branches of some yet earlier and more primitive civilization of which no traces have so far been found. Stone amulets and also remains of curious beehive-shaped structures on stone foundations—which were perhaps temples—suggest that this Syrian Culture was connected with, or at least influenced by, the prehistoric culture of the Ægean region of Europe.

Assyria, that fertile district between the middle Tigris and the Kurdish hills,¹ was the meeting-ground of Syrian and Highland Culture. At Arpachîyeh, as we have seen, the Syrians were in possession before the Highlanders : but at Nineveh, Highland ware was found at a lower level than Syrian, whilst at Tepe Gawra nearby the two kinds actually mingled. Evidently, Syrians and Highlanders entered Assyria, the ones from over the Euphrates and the others from

¹ See Map II.

further down the Tigris, almost at the same time, and dwelt there side by side.¹

3. *The Northern Culture*

We have now to discuss the evidence of a great racial movement which would seem to have swept across the middle East, not later than the earlier half of the IV millennium B.C. and produced a profound revolution of culture there. The origin of this movement must be sought outside the bounds of our own area, at the extreme western end of the peninsula of Asia Minor, in the region of the city of Troy. Here, it seems, was the home of a culture fully as old as, but altogether different from, the Highland and Syrian Cultures already described. This is generally called the Red-Ware Culture of Asia Minor, the Anatolian-Transcaucasian Culture or—more shortly and conveniently—the Northern Culture. The oldest stage of the culture is characterized by very handsome *black burnished* pottery in shapes imitating gourds and skin vessels, sometimes decorated with incised patterns, but never under any circumstances painted, the black colour being due to the way in which the pot was fired. Later, this black ware degenerates into ashy grey, whilst—apparently at the time when the use of copper was first introduced—a fine clear red ware, whose colour is also produced by firing, makes its appearance. In shape, these pots are less attractive than the best examples of the Highland wares. Perhaps their most typical feature is the spouts with which many of the vessels are provided.

There is a mass of evidence, too great to be examined here, which shows that at a very early date this Northern Culture began to spread eastward into the province of the Highland Culture and south-eastward into that of the Syrian Culture, establishing itself throughout Northern Persia along the shore of the Caspian Sea and penetrating as far east as Anau in Turkestan.

¹ In Mr. Mallowan's excavations at Chagar Bazâr, in Mesopotamia proper, Highland and Syrian pottery have also been found mingled together at the lowest level.

THE NORTHERN CULTURE

Strange mixtures of Northern and Highland technique—red vases with decorations in black paint—show how the two cultures mingled. In Syria, it established itself at a very early date, for Northern pottery found at the lowest level at Tell Halâf seems to be older than the painted Syrian pottery there. In Susa, moreover, specimens of red ware have now been found mingled with the typical painted ‘Susa I’ pottery, showing that even as far to the south-east as this, influences from Asia Minor were making themselves felt very early. As time went on, a period of degeneracy overcame the city of Susa which, for a while, was almost deserted, probably as the result of a drouth. It is just at this time that the Northern influence there seems to have gained the upper hand. Red pots are found with black designs in the old Highland tradition, and with them we find objects of another sort which appear to be absolutely typical of the Northern Culture—small stone stamp-seals, round or square or often in the shape of an animal, their flat surfaces bearing engraved designs, sometimes quite elaborate, which were used for stamping on soft clay lumps to seal the cords of packages or the mouths of jars.

A new civilization—generally referred to as ‘Susa II’ sprang up in Susa after the first, Highland civilization had finally disappeared. The question whether it developed out of the earlier one is keenly debated by archæologists to-day. The only point which strictly concerns us here is that this new civilization was still more under the influence of the Northern Culture than was the older one. Pots with lug-handles, stone vases with several compartments or in the shape of animals or birds, and stamp-seals all seem to be typical of that culture. At the same time there appears a peculiar type of painted pottery with realistic pictures of animals. The same highly individual ware has also been found at Nineveh and Tepe Gawra in Assyria, but at those sites it is demonstrably much later in date than the typical pottery of the Northern Culture. Its original home may well have been India.

In this stratum, too, a more profound revolution in human works and ways makes its appearance. *Writing* had been invented. Clay tablets appear, inscribed with most curious little picture-signs which constitute what archæologists call

the '*Proto-Elamite script*'—a script which, unfortunately, cannot be read. We shall see presently that in Babylonia also the increase of Northern influence over the native culture was followed by the introduction of the greatest of all human arts.

The archæology of the 'Susa II' civilization is difficult and obscure, raising many problems which have not even been formulated in the above paragraph. In el-'Irâq, on the other hand, the position is considerably clearer; and that this is the case is due wholly and solely to the wonderfully careful and wonderfully well-repaid work carried out by Dr. Julius Jordan and Dr. Arnold Nöldeke, on behalf of the *Notgemeinschaft der Deutschen Wissenschaften* at the city of *Uruk* in Southern Babylonia.

Here, in the vicinity of the ancient and holy temple of the Mother Goddess, the German excavators have carried their work clean down to virgin soil and have been able to distinguish and dissect no less than 18 successive strata of remains between the beginning of the 'el-'Ubeid Period' and the earliest historical times. Of these the lowermost three layers contain exclusively Highland Culture remains such as have been previously described. No copper was found, but its absence is probably accidental, for it was certainly used by people of the Highland Culture from the earliest times. Then, in the Fifteenth Level (the strata are numbered from top to bottom, No. I being the latest and No. XVIII the oldest) Northern ware is found mingled with that of el-'Ubeid—typical sherds of grey and red, the latter often owing its colour to the application of a red 'slip'. In the next layer above, the Highland ware was already beginning to go out of fashion. Æsthetically, this is a loss, for the Northern ware never achieves the beauty of the fine painted fabrics; but, as we shall see, its appearance was the herald of a higher and more vigorous civilization. In the levels immediately above, the two flourish side-by-side (a proof that the penetration of the newcomers into el-'Irâq was of a peaceful nature). Oddly, though some of the el-'Ubeid ware had been fashioned on the potter's wheel, the earliest Northern ware was all hand-made, and much of it of a very rough and coarse description. It is in the Seventh Level that, judging from the pottery, the civilization of the newcomers

THE NORTHERN CULTURE

finally triumphs over the old Highland Culture and, immediately, a great forward step appears to be made in all branches of human activity. It is even possible that there is evidence here of a new influx of foreigners into the land.

More important than the pottery was the discovery at this level of a small pavement of rough limestone blocks. This is the oldest stone construction in Babylonia. The people of the el-'Ubeid Period, despite their Highland origin, had never attempted to use stone for building purposes.

We are now at the dawn of a great age in Babylonian history. Very soon after the little pavement just referred to, there arose the first great monumental building of the country, the prototype of a class which was to be typical of all Sumerian and Babylonian architecture for thirty centuries and more—the oldest *ziggurat* or high-place of a god. The nature of a *ziggurat* was briefly indicated in Chapter I. It was essentially an *artificial mountain*, on top of which the god was supposed to dwell, at any rate at times, in a shrine which was built for his use. In historical times, the *ziggurat* took the form of a terraced tower of super-imposed blocks of solid brickwork, decreasing in size toward the top like the 'zoned' skyscrapers of New York. This oldest example of such a work stood in what was later (and presumably at this time also) the temple-enclosure of the Sumerian sky-god, An. It consisted simply of a vast mass of hard-stamped clay, strengthened with layers of asphalt and unburnt *libn* bricks, measuring roughly some 150 by 140 ft., and standing about 30 ft. high. The upper edges of this tumulus were strengthened in a most extraordinary way by embedding in them layers of large tubular clay jars which would support them and prevent their crumbling slowly away under the force of winter rains.

Like all others, this earliest *ziggurat* was crowned by a temple which, owing to the fact of its having been carefully built over before it had been long in use, was found in splendid preservation, even to the whitewash on its mud-brick walls, which led the Germans to call it *der Weisse Tempel*, 'the White Temple'. It is very possibly the oldest religious building in the world and, as such, is of quite exceptional interest. It is rather more than 65 ft. in length and some 50 ft. wide, and

THE AGE OF PAINTED POTTERY

is built about a long narrow court, about 14 ft. across. Like the *ziggurat* on which it stands, it is orientated with its corners toward the points of the compass, and this was the case with every subsequent Sumerian temple ever built. The plan was simple, consisting of two parallel rows of small chambers all opening on the court. At either end, two doors side-by-side gave into the court. There was a large doorway with a lobby in the centre of the south-west side. Outer walls and courtyard walls alike showed another feature which was to be repeated by all the later temples and palaces of el-'Irâq—they were ornamented with a series of doubly-recessed vertical niches from ground to roof, intended by a contrast of shadow and strong sunlight, to break the monotony of the windowless surfaces. Judging from impressions left in the asphalt paving of the *ziggurat's* top, the temple was surrounded by a row of wooden columns which supported a projecting roof.

In this temple were found two objects of the most vital importance, small square tablets of gypsum plaster, bearing impressions of cylinder-seals (*i.e.* of roller-shaped seals which were rolled across the surface instead of being stamped on it) with figures of dancing men (?) and what appear—by comparison with later cuneiform writing—to be *numerals*. If this is really the case, then the oldest temple in the world has also yielded us the oldest written documents.¹

The great *ziggurat* was soon followed by other monumental buildings. Not very long after its erection, a far more splendid temple was set up in the other holy precinct of Uruk, the sacred enclosure of the Mother-Goddess called in Sumerian *E-anna* 'the House of Heaven'. This great oblong building, measuring 90 by 30 ft. or more, gives a most important proof of the foreign traditions that the folk of the Northern Culture brought in with them from their mountain home, for it is built throughout upon foundations of limestone. No one who has not made first-hand acquaintance with the eternal mud and brick of Babylonian ruins can imagine the significance of this rarity or the impression which it makes on the mind

¹ The earliest Egyptian hieroglyphs may be as old as this, but scarcely older.

THE NORTHERN CULTURE

of the antiquary. It is as extraordinary as a building of glass or vulcanite or some other out-of-the-way material would be to-day, and gives a certain indication, not only of the vigour and ability of the prehistoric inhabitants of Uruk, but also of their wealth. In plan, it resembles the White Temple just described, save that at the south-western end of the court stood a holy of holies composed of three connected chambers, the central one approached by an ornamental doorway. The mud-brick walls which rested upon the foundations of stone were decorated with wide vertical niches dividing them into a series of buttresses.

Of about the same date is another building on a stone foundation and a large terrace or platform of great blocks of sun-dried clay, its front adorned with three-sided pilasters, which was obviously the foundation of some important structure. Evidently, the temple-enclosure of the Mother-Goddess at this remote period already contained monumental buildings as fine as any subsequently erected there.

It was at a rather later period, however, that the supreme achievement of prehistoric Babylonian architecture—perhaps the most remarkable building ever erected in el-'Irâq—arose, in place of some older structure upon the great terrace of which we have just heard. The credit of having first discovered this splendid monument goes, not to the German expedition whom we must thank for so much of our knowledge of Babylonian prehistory, but to W. K. Loftus who (as we saw in Chapter I) dug at Uruk for the British Museum as early as 1854 and uncovered the well-preserved remains of a wall superbly decorated with a mosaic of slender terra-cotta cones or pencils (such as were known in Babylonia in the days of el-'Ubeid), their heads coloured red, white and black, which were driven into the plaster, one beside another, so as to cover the whole wall-surface with a rich pattern of triangles and zigzags. The unique nature of the discovery was scarcely appreciated at the time, the building sanded up again and was lost, and it was not until the season of 1930-31 that Dr. Jordan uncovered it once more. It has now been completely excavated and can be described in the detail it deserves.

It belongs to the Fourth Level of the excavators' scheme—

THE AGE OF PAINTED POTTERY

a level which represents the ultimate achievement of the Northern Culture in el-'Irâq.

So far as its remains allow us to judge, this vast and splendid building was about 180 ft. wide and at least 240 ft. long. The main part of it lay on the terrace previously erected : but in front of this there was an enclosed courtyard, upon two—and probably three—sides of which chambers opened. The three walls of this were delightfully ornamented with the three-coloured mosaic of clay cones in patterns of zigzags or diamonds. The fourth side of the court—the north-western—was that upon which the older platform gave. The front of this platform was now ornamented with mosaics. A double staircase, and a single staircase in the eastern corner of the court, led up to it. The wall along which the latter ran was decorated with ten slender semicircular pilasters each encrusted from top to bottom with a different pattern of mosaic. On the edge of the platform itself stood a magnificent pillared portico, consisting of two rows of four circular columns nearly 9 ft. in diameter, each row terminating at either end in a semicircular pilaster built up against the side-walls of the porch. The side-wall of the north-eastern end was pierced by a doorway which led either to the open air or to some part of the building now destroyed. The portico and its pillars were all encrusted with the same brilliant mosaic. Behind this lay another very long court, surrounded by chambers, which is now almost completely destroyed.

Enough has been said to make it obvious that we have here one of the handsomest and most remarkable buildings ever discovered in the middle East. The incredibly lavish use of richly coloured mosaic alone singles it out for admiration. The present writer had the good fortune to visit Uruk whilst the building was still in course of excavation. To eyes which had grown tediously accustomed to the unvarying tawny-coloured brick of other Babylonian buildings, the sight of these red, white and black banded walls with their harmonious and intricate decoration was only more delightful than unexpected. The slim clay cones with painted heads had excellently preserved their colours, and the effect, under the flaming sunlight of an 'Irâqi spring, was of the complicated

patterns on the skin of some rare snake. What the great temple—if such it was—must have been in its days of pride, we can imagine. Its columns and courtyards and brilliant decoration must have given it that quality—lacking in every other Sumerian building—of luminous richness that one enjoys in a fine Persian or Egyptian mosque of coloured tiles.

The people who built this temple were civilized. Their material was the most primitive imaginable—the common mud. The patterns of their mosaics were derived (as Dr. Nöldeke has shown) from the mats with which a savage lines his hut. Their columns—the oldest so far discovered in the world—are imitated directly from the trunk of the palm. But with these primitive patterns and primitive material they had constructed something that completely satisfies the æsthetic sense even to-day. They were grown-up.

This wonderful building must have had a long life, for the excavators were able to trace several minor repairs and alterations which were carried out on it after it was first constructed. Nevertheless, it was finally scrapped, whilst still in good condition, its court and portico bricked-over (which circumstance we have to thank for their preservation until our day), and a new building, as large but less magnificent, having neither columns nor mosaics, raised on top of it. In adjacent ruins of less importance, which there is no room to describe here, we have further evidence of a slow process of alteration and restoration which must have taken many years.

One more building, coming at the very end of the long prehistoric period with which we have been dealing, remains to be mentioned. It is the so-called 'Red Temple' whose fragmentary ruins show signs of a rich plum-red paint having been applied to the walls. It was during the period when this temple was built and the great mosaic temple transformed *that the art of writing settled definitely into the channels along which it was to run for some 3,000 years and more.* Thin flat tablets of crude clay have been found, inscribed in a picture-writing which was unquestionably the direct ancestor of cuneiform. The pictographs—already highly conventionalized—were drawn on the still wet clay with a stylus of wood or bone. Since the medium was not suitable to freehand

drawing, the different hieroglyphs were very soon to be reduced to merely arbitrary groups of lines, from which the cuneiform, the 'wedge-writing', of later times rapidly developed. Unfortunately, the tablets of this period cannot yet be accurately translated. Indeed, we are not absolutely certain of the language which was spoken by their writers, for the signs employed are purely 'ideographic' (*i.e.* separate pictures standing for separate ideas) and do not provide us with any clue as to the grammatical inflections, without which the philologist is helpless. As Dr. Jordan¹ says: 'It is not yet a writing of language, for the development from the symbol of an idea to the symbol of a word or syllable has not yet taken place. Rather, there appears to be expressed in a general way the fact that the object *etc.* represented stands, in the quantity represented by the numeral, in some sort of relationship to somebody or other, probably the temple E-anna. This relationship and the "somebody" are not expressed by the picture. If one regards the texts as inventories, one will, I think, be pretty near the mark.'

The numerals, on the other hand, are perfectly comprehensible and show us that the *sexagesimal system* was already in use in Babylonia.² This system probably originated from the habit of counting, not 5 + 5 fingers as did the inventors of the decimal system, but 5 fingers + 1 palm. That the numeral system should be so far in advance of the rest of the art of writing is, in the present author's opinion, a proof that writing was originally invented for the purpose of keeping tallies and making lists: that numbers are, in fact, an earlier invention than letters.

Of the same age as these clay lists and inventories are a number of clay lumps, used for stopping jars, bearing the impression of cylinder-seals which had now superseded the older stamp-seals. The carvings on these are both handsome and interesting. Unlike the designs of the stamp-seals, they surprise us by their realism. A commonly-represented scene is that of a bearded man with his hair rolled in a great bunch on

¹ *Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaft*, Jahrg. 1930, n. 24.

² cf. Ch. V.

THE NORTHERN CULTURE

his neck and enclosed by a fillet, wearing a long robe and a sash and carrying a tall lance in his hand. Before him crouch several captives, their necks and knees fastened together and their arms tied behind them. Attendants are engaged apparently in clubbing or stabbing these to death. Captives and executioners are both clean shaven and apparently naked.

It is a most significant fact that on certain finely-carved palettes of slate which have been found in Egypt and which belong to the period just before the I Egyptian Dynasty, rather similar scenes of execution or sacrifice in the presence of a king are pictured. Moreover, at about the same time, the art of making brick buildings with vertically-recessed walls and of carving cylinder-seals also appears in the Nile Valley, whilst a famous carved ivory dagger-hilt from Gebel-el-'Arâq in Egypt shows a god robed and bearded precisely in the fashion of the spear-bearer on the Uruk seals. A connection seems certain. We shall learn in a moment that very soon indeed after the time that the seals were carved, a new race invaded and mastered el-'Irâq, and that the men of this race dressed and looked precisely as the spear-bearing lords on the seals do. Are we, then, to see in the latter the fore-runners of the new race, who had already established themselves as bloodthirsty tyrants over the city of Uruk? The fact that the typical pottery of the new race is not found at this level suggests the contrary. Then are the seal-carvings and the bloody sacrifices an art and a custom which had evolved gradually in el-'Irâq during previous centuries?

We do not know; and our ignorance here prevents our answering the more exciting question of how the undoubted foreign influence which we have just noticed in Egypt reached that land: whether it came directly from Sumer before the arrival of the new race there; or whether whilst one branch of that new race was filtering into el-'Irâq another was settling on the Nile. The present author somewhat inclines to the former theory, so long as it is understood not to imply that people actually from el-'Irâq necessarily reached Egypt. A mere drift of ideas and customs from Babylonia south-west through Syria and Palestine to the Nile is all that need be

THE AGE OF PAINTED POTTERY

assumed ; but there can be no certainty in the matter until much—very much—more evidence is brought to hand.

The Mosaic Building, the Red Temple and the other antiquities that accompany them represent the final flowering at Uruk of what we have agreed to call the Northern Culture. The whole period of that culture's supremacy—the time represented by the Seventh to the Fourth Levels of the excavators' plans—is technically known (most appropriately) as the *Uruk Period* in the prehistory of Babylonia. Although most of our knowledge of this period is due to the brilliant work of Drs. Jordan and Nöldeke at Uruk itself, enough evidence has accrued from other sites to show that the Northern Culture was extended over the whole of Babylonia and Assyria. At Ur, no glorious monuments of this period have come to light ; but the humble fragments of pottery tell their own clear tale. In digging down to virgin soil, Sir Charles Woolley encountered the typical red ware of the Northerners at about 30 ft. above sea-level and followed it down to the strata of painted el-'Ubeid ware, with the latest of which it was found mingled, just as at Uruk. Remains of brickwork and painted clay cones discovered beneath the great platform on which the *ziggurat* of the Moongod was built suggest that here, too, a *ziggurat* and a temple with mosaics had existed during the Uruk Period. Plentiful pottery of this date was found at the small ruin of Muraijib in the desert about 21 miles south of Ur, and at the important Sumerian city of Lagash. At Nineveh, in Assyria, the Northerners were also in occupation, whilst it appears that at the neighbouring site of Tepe Gawra they have left very extensive remains.¹

We have, in fact, overwhelming proof that the old Highland Culture with its painted pottery was gradually superseded in el-'Irâq by a newer and more vigorous civilization, certainly introduced by foreign settlers. This conclusion leaves us facing two immensely important and extremely puzzling questions : (a) Whence, precisely, did these gifted newcomers descend upon el-'Irâq ? (b) In what relationship do they stand to that

¹ The writer much regrets that Prof. Speiser's book on the Oriental Institute of Chicago's diggings at Tepe Gawra appeared too late for him to consult it in writing this chapter.

THE NORTHERN CULTURE

Sumerian race whom, at the dawn of written history, we find in full possession of the land ?

It had better be said at once that nothing is further from the writer's intention than to give a plain answer to either of these questions. Like everyone else who has studied the matter, he has his opinions, but opinions do not constitute evidence. That the pottery of the Uruk Period is related to the early pottery of Asia Minor is indisputable. But the writer would object very strongly to any attempt to conclude from this that people from that region made their way into el-'Irâq. As a matter of fact, though the technique is the same, the most typical *forms* of the early pottery of Asia Minor are conspicuously absent from the 'Uruk' pottery of el-'Irâq. The forms which take their places may well be derived from them, but if so, they have suffered a sea-change. We saw on a previous page that it was possible to trace the 'Anatolian-Transcaucasian Culture' in its spread westward through Armenia and Northern Persia, along the southern shore of the Caspian Sea to Turkestan. It really does not seem impossible that bold wanderers from Anatolia and the Troad may have migrated eastward as far as Anau. But it looks—no stronger word ought to be used at present—it *looks* as though the pottery of the Northerners in el-'Irâq were only indirectly derived from theirs. If he felt forced (as he does not) to produce a theory on the subject, the author of this text-book would suggest that the immigrants who brought the Northern Culture into el-'Irâq (and also to Susa) may have been a people originally settled not far from the Caspian Sea, who received the 'red-ware'¹ technique of making pottery from invading peoples of Asia Minor, developed it along their own lines and finally—perhaps as the result of pressure from those same invaders—moved out of their own homeland into el-'Irâq.

The above is not even a theory ; is merely the adumbration of a theory. The account just given of the evidence at our disposal is partial and sketchy. Much of importance has been passed over, in order to avoid expanding a text-book into a tome or confusing the general reader with technicalities. The

¹ The words are used only as a convenient label for all the various types of Northern pottery (red, black, grey, etc.).

THE AGE OF PAINTED POTTERY

assumed ; but there can be no certainty in the matter until much—very much—more evidence is brought to hand.

The Mosaic Building, the Red Temple and the other antiquities that accompany them represent the final flowering at Uruk of what we have agreed to call the Northern Culture. The whole period of that culture's supremacy—the time represented by the Seventh to the Fourth Levels of the excavators' plans—is technically known (most appropriately) as the *Uruk Period* in the prehistory of Babylonia. Although most of our knowledge of this period is due to the brilliant work of Drs. Jordan and Nöldeke at Uruk itself, enough evidence has accrued from other sites to show that the Northern Culture was extended over the whole of Babylonia and Assyria. At Ur, no glorious monuments of this period have come to light ; but the humble fragments of pottery tell their own clear tale. In digging down to virgin soil, Sir Charles Woolley encountered the typical red ware of the Northerners at about 30 ft. above sea-level and followed it down to the strata of painted el-'Ubeid ware, with the latest of which it was found mingled, just as at Uruk. Remains of brickwork and painted clay cones discovered beneath the great platform on which the *ziggurat* of the Moongod was built suggest that here, too, a *ziggurat* and a temple with mosaics had existed during the Uruk Period. Plentiful pottery of this date was found at the small ruin of Muraijib in the desert about 21 miles south of Ur, and at the important Sumerian city of Lagash. At Nineveh, in Assyria, the Northerners were also in occupation, whilst it appears that at the neighbouring site of Tepe Gawra they have left very extensive remains.¹

We have, in fact, overwhelming proof that the old Highland Culture with its painted pottery was gradually superseded in el-'Irâq by a newer and more vigorous civilization, certainly introduced by foreign settlers. This conclusion leaves us facing two immensely important and extremely puzzling questions : (a) Whence, precisely, did these gifted newcomers descend upon el-'Irâq ? (b) In what relationship do they stand to that

¹ The writer much regrets that Prof. Speiser's book on the Oriental Institute of Chicago's diggings at Tepe Gawra appeared too late for him to consult it in writing this chapter.

THE NORTHERN CULTURE

Sumerian race whom, at the dawn of written history, we find in full possession of the land?

It had better be said at once that nothing is further from the writer's intention than to give a plain answer to either of these questions. Like everyone else who has studied the matter, he has his opinions, but opinions do not constitute evidence. That the pottery of the Uruk Period is related to the early pottery of Asia Minor is indisputable. But the writer would object very strongly to any attempt to conclude from this that people from that region made their way into el-'Irâq. As a matter of fact, though the technique is the same, the most typical *forms* of the early pottery of Asia Minor are conspicuously absent from the 'Uruk' pottery of el-'Irâq. The forms which take their places may well be derived from them, but if so, they have suffered a sea-change. We saw on a previous page that it was possible to trace the 'Anatolian-Transcaucasian Culture' in its spread westward through Armenia and Northern Persia, along the southern shore of the Caspian Sea to Turkestan. It really does not seem impossible that bold wanderers from Anatolia and the Troad may have migrated eastward as far as Anau. But it looks—no stronger word ought to be used at present—it *looks* as though the pottery of the Northerners in el-'Irâq were only indirectly derived from theirs. If he felt forced (as he does not) to produce a theory on the subject, the author of this text-book would suggest that the immigrants who brought the Northern Culture into el-'Irâq (and also to Susa) may have been a people originally settled not far from the Caspian Sea, who received the 'red-ware'¹ technique of making pottery from invading peoples of Asia Minor, developed it along their own lines and finally—perhaps as the result of pressure from those same invaders—moved out of their own homeland into el-'Irâq.

The above is not even a theory; is merely the adumbration of a theory. The account just given of the evidence at our disposal is partial and sketchy. Much of importance has been passed over, in order to avoid expanding a text-book into a tome or confusing the general reader with technicalities. The

¹ The words are used only as a convenient label for all the various types of Northern pottery (red, black, grey, etc.).

THE AGE OF PAINTED POTTERY

German excavators, for example, do not regard the Uruk Period as an historical unity ; but see in the wealth of new pottery-forms appearing in their Sixth Level proof of a second invasion of Babylonia from without. The present author, whilst reluctant to differ from historians more erudite and experienced than himself, cannot but feel that this is pushing the evidence of mere pottery too far. Again, a new class of *painted* pottery, not previously mentioned, makes its appearance during the Uruk Period, alongside the typical red, black and grey wares. This is decorated simply with horizontal bands of light red paint on pinkish-buff clay. Since the British Museum excavations at *Carchemish* (mod. Jerabîs) on the Upper Euphrates, before the War, revealed similar pottery at the lowest levels there, some authorities have concluded that people from Syria as well as from the hilly North entered Babylonia during the Uruk Period. There is nothing impossible in this ; but the question is an obscure one.

With regard to the second problem—the relationship of the Northern incomers to the historical Sumerians—we are perhaps not quite so completely in the dark. Of course, since no invasion of so large a country as Babylonia can ever result in the complete wiping-out of the previous population, it is obvious that the people whom, when we encounter them at the end of the IV millennium B.C., we call ‘ Sumerian ’ must really be a mixture of all the races that had previously settled in el-‘Irâq. But since one highly individual language and one peculiar set of religious, political and artistic ideas is characteristic of the population at that date, we are entitled to ask to which of the various waves of newcomers, of whose arrival in Babylonia we have material evidence, we should attribute them. Leaving out of account those characteristics (such as language, forms of government, morality) which we cannot compare over the two periods, because of our want of information during the earlier one, we may select the following decidedly idiosyncratic traits as being typical of the Sumerians throughout their known history :

- I. The use of cuneiform writing.
- II. The use of cylinder-seals.

THE NORTHERN CULTURE

- III. The use (during the earliest historical period only) of stone foundations for buildings.
- IV. The building of *ziggurats* or ' high-places ' for the gods,
- V. and of great temples on the level in which to worship these gods.
- VI. The use of pottery without painted designs.
- VII. The wearing (during the earliest period) of sheep-skin clothes.
- VIII. The carving of stone sculptures.
- IX. The custom of stripping naked to perform religious ceremonies.
- X. The custom of human sacrifice (again during the earliest period only).
- XI. The use of vertical recesses to decorate the walls of buildings,
- XII. and the laying-out of buildings with their corners to the points of the compass.
- XIII. The drawing-up and careful preservation of inventories of property.
- XIV. The sexagesimal system of counting.
- XV. The use of ' plano-convex ' bricks.¹
- XVI. The use of wheeled vehicles drawn by oxen and asses,
- XVII. and of socketed metal weapons.

The above list is, of course, incomplete, but adequate for our purpose. We may now compare the habits and accomplishments comprised in it with those of the people of the Uruk Period. As to VII and XV (the wearing of sheepskin dress and the making of odd little bun-shaped bricks for building), we can say definitely that the historical Sumerians differed from the Northerners. As to XVI and XVII we have no evidence during the Uruk Period, though a broken seal-impression from the Fourth Level *may* represent a man driving a chariot ; and (VIII) the only known sculptures of that age are vases, not statues or statuettes. On the other hand, seals of the late Uruk age show us naked men killing captives before a god or king and also performing ceremonies at the gates of temples (IX and X). *Ziggurats*, large temples

¹ cf. Ch. III.

THE AGE OF PAINTED POTTERY

with recessed walls and corners toward the cardinal points, sometimes on stone foundations (IV, V, IX, X, XI, XII) all belong to that age, as we have seen. The pottery (VI) has been discussed already, as have the numeral system and the picture-writing from which cuneiform developed. Generally speaking, then, the Uruk civilization shows many close resemblances to that of the historical Sumerians. Then did the Sumerians (who are known to have been a mountain folk ¹) enter el-'Irâq at the end of the Highland Culture, bringing with them traditions partly evolved by themselves and partly acquired by them from the invaders from Asia Minor? The present writer is strongly tempted to believe they did; but in dealing, on evidence so slender, with matters so difficult and so remote, the wise man will seek refuge in the words used so often by every conscientious archæologist: 'I do not know.'

4. *The Jemdet-Nasr Invasion*

The last phase of the prehistory of Babylonia is perhaps the most mysterious. At several sites in el-'Irâq a type of painted pottery quite different from that of the old Highland and Syrian Cultures has been found. Its characteristics are the use of black and dull greasy red or plum-coloured paint *side-by-side* on the same vase, clumsy and careless drawing of the geometrical patterns with which the vases are decorated, and the predominance of narrow-necked angular shapes suggesting imitations of metal vessels. This pottery was first discovered in 1925 by the late—alas!—Prof. Langdon at the small mound called Jemdet-Nasr, lying in almost unexplored desert some 14 miles north-east of *Kûsh* in N. Babylonia, where the Professor was then excavating on behalf of the University of Oxford and the Field Museum of Chicago. The civilization of which the pottery is typical is accordingly called the *Jemdet-Nasr Culture*.

The chief building found at the mound of Jemdet-Nasr itself was apparently a residence. It measured only some

¹ cf. Ch. I.

THE JEMDET-NASR INVASION

20 by 35 ft. or so and consisted of a number of cell-like chambers built around two small courtyards. From the front, it was approached by a long narrow staircase. Adjacent to this were ruins of houses, some of which had been destroyed by fire. Among these ruins were found the typical polychrome-decorated pottery, fine vases of porphyry, granite, aragonite and alabaster, small stone carvings of sheep and pigs, an axe and two barbed fish-hooks of copper, and tablets in a semi-pictograph script which is slightly more advanced than that of the Uruk Period.

Excavation at other sites has taught us more concerning the culture of this period, which certainly represents an invasion of the land by foreigners. Typical of the period are stone sculptures, which will be discussed presently, and the use of lead for making vessels *etc.* Excavations at *Kish* (mod. Tell Uheimar) and *Shuruppak* (mod. Farah) have shown that these two very important cities were founded by the newcomers, whose polychrome pottery lies on virgin soil there. Elsewhere, it is found mingled with the pottery of the latest stage of the Uruk Period and never entirely superseding it.

As usual, it is the excavations at Uruk itself that give us the fullest information. Actually, only a very few sherds of polychrome-painted ware have been found there: but a comparison of unpainted pottery and of inscribed tablets with specimens found at Jemdet-Nasr itself has enabled the excavators to say with certainty that their Second and Third Levels belong to the Jemdet-Nasr Period, though one is entitled to doubt whether the invaders settled at Uruk in great numbers.

Considerable changes took place at this time in the great sacred enclosure of E-Anna on which the work of the expedition has been chiefly concentrated. It appears that the enclosure was reduced in size. The temple which had replaced the superb Mosaic Building was scrapped and levelled in its turn, and a new temple on a different plan erected over part of it. Very little of this now remains: but adjacent to it was found a most queer little building which the excavators christened 'the Labyrinth'. It consisted of a number of small rooms of very irregular shape arranged about three sides of an enclosed court. Some of the interior walls had been painted

THE AGE OF PAINTED POTTERY

red and others more ambitiously decorated in red, white, black and yellow.

Another ruined building, not far away, yielded the fragments of a really superb alabaster vase carved in bas-relief with scenes of men carrying offerings to a temple and of gods standing upon the backs of animals—a wonderful development of the fine vigorous art already shown by the seals of the earlier period. We have seen that stone sculpture was a typical achievement of the Jemdet-Nasr folk. A very fine carving of a wild-boar couchant,¹ found at Ur, belongs to this age: but more remarkable still is the grand monument discovered at Uruk in the season 1932-3, which constitutes the first really ambitious piece of sculpture in Babylonian history. It is a partly smoothed block of basalt, originally about 3 ft. high but now somewhat broken, carved in bas-relief with a hunting-scene. Two men, bearded and costumed like the figures on the seals, are shown fighting three lions, all of which are already pierced by arrows. One rears itself up as the huntsman plunges a lance into its breast. The other two are shot down at a distance with a long-bow. There is, of course, much that is crude and clumsy about the work; yet it has a vigour that is curiously compelling and it gives promise of the short but splendid period of fine sculpture which was to follow the close of the prehistoric period.

Three more pieces of sculpture, which have long been known to archæologists, date probably from the very end of the Jemdet-Nasr Culture. Two are the so-called 'Blau Monuments' in the British Museum, small odd-shaped stones with well-carved figures of men like the hunters from Uruk, and others who are clean-shaven, apparently performing religious rites. These are accompanied by an inscription (which cannot be satisfactorily translated) in a style of writing rather more developed than that of the tablets from Jemdet-Nasr itself. The third is a small tablet of yellowish limestone called by French archæologists *La Figure aux Plumes*. It was found at *Lagash* (mod. Tell Loh) and is now in the Louvre. It shows

¹ It was apparently meant to serve as a pedestal for a statuette, which provides an interesting comparison with the animal-riding gods on the Uruk vase.



BASALT STELA OF THE JEMDET-NASR PERIOD.
From Uruk; the oldest sculptured monument yet found in el-Iraq.



STELA OF NARAM-SIN, SHOWING THAT KING ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE
(LOUVRE, PARIS.)

VII. 1. *Assyrian*

THE JEMDET-NASR INVASION

a bearded man with two feathers or palm-fronds in his hair, standing in an attitude of reverence before three upright posts or columns. The accompanying inscription seems to be a list of goods (perhaps offerings?) and mentions a temple famous in later Sumerian history, *E-ninmu*, 'the House of Fifty (gods)', the shrine of the god Ningirsu at Lagash.

We may also cite here a priceless stone tablet found at Kish, with an inscription in characters older than those previously mentioned, which Prof. Langdon was able partly to decipher. It seems to be a list of slaves and may contain the proper name of a man, *Sagda*. The inscriptions of the Jemdet-Nasr Period are unquestionably Sumerian, for they contain the names of Sumerian gods. But it does not at all follow that the Jemdet-Nasr people were Sumerians. The contrary is more probable, for we shall see that their typical culture disappears suddenly in a catastrophe, and that after them it was the Sumerians who ruled the land.

It seems reasonable to think of them as intruders who merely imposed themselves on the already established Sumerian population for a time. The fact that at Kish, at Jemdet-Nasr itself, at Shuruppak and at Eshnunna, they founded new cities for themselves suggests that they were on no good terms with their neighbours, a probability made stronger by the evidence of excavation that some of their settlements were eventually destroyed by fire. Whence they came, we do not know. Their culture has been called 'Lowland Culture' to distinguish it from the old 'Highland Culture', and it has been suggested that their home was in Syria. But there is no proof of this. Some would see India and some Persia as their place of origin: but though their polychrome pottery has been found at Susa, we cannot at present take either suggestion very seriously.

Perhaps the most striking proof of their foreignness to el-'Irâq is found in the discovery made at Uruk that some at least of them burned instead of burying their dead. A building was found, dating from the very beginning of the Jemdet-Nasr Period, which was nothing more nor less than a crematorium. In rooms opening off the usual courtyard were pits which had been lined with clay and a fire lighted in them. When this

THE AGE OF PAINTED POTTERY

had burned out, the corpse, encased in clay and accompanied by food-offerings in pots, was introduced and a fire lighted on top of it. This was utterly unlike anything previously or subsequently known in Babylonia ; and the custom was not universally adopted there. At Ur, a cemetery of the same date has been dug, and here the dead were buried, in a crouching position with the legs drawn up in front of the body, without any trace of burning. Pots, both of Jemdet-Nasr and Uruk types, were placed in the graves, as well as stone vases—some finely carved with figures of animals walking in file—and the odd little leaden goblets already mentioned. One grave yielded an amusing stone lamp so carved that, when viewed from above, it resembles a shell but, on being turned over, becomes a lifelike figure of a flying bat. It is obvious, of course, that the custom of cremation and that of burial in the crouching attitude (as apart from the extended posture of the el-'Ubeid Period) cannot both belong to the same race. It seems natural to think that cremation was the usage of the Jemdet-Nasr invaders, and the crouching burials that of the older Northerners. The customs and arts, the typical pottery, of the latter continued in use side by side with those of the newcomers and survived after their disappearance—a circumstance which seems to afford further proof of the identity of the Northerners with the Sumerians.

It has been said already that the Jemdet-Nasr Period ended in catastrophe. So far as we can tell, this catastrophe was of a double nature. There are traces at more than one site of the invaders eventually having had their houses fired about their ears. But at Uruk and Shuruppak, the last Jemdet-Nasr remains are separated from those of the subsequent early historical period by a deposit of clean water-laid clay (nearly 5 ft. thick at Uruk), obviously the result of a flood. Now Shuruppak was the traditional home of Ziusuddu, the Babylonian Noah, who, with his family, was alone supposed to have survived its destruction by water. The great flood which (as is well known) inundated Ur during the el-'Ubeid Period has sometimes been claimed as the original of the Sumerian (and hence the Biblical) Deluge-Story. But this is not probable. The Sumerians believed that the Flood came just

THE JEMDET-NASR INVASION

before the beginning of written history, did damage over an enormous area and, in particular, destroyed Shuruppak. The Ur flood did none of these things; but the flood which damaged both Uruk and Shuruppak at the end of the Jemdet-Nasr period fits the requirements and so *may*, conceivably, actually have been the catastrophe referred to in the following account supposed to have been given to one of his descendants by Ziusuddu himself:

I will open unto thee a secret matter, and unto thee even will reveal the counsels of the gods. Shuruppak, a city which thyself knowest, which is set on the bank of the Euphrates—that city was waxed old; and the gods within it, great gods—their heart moved them to bring about a deluge . . .

The Brighteyed Lord, the god Enki was in converse with them, but he repeated their words to a reed-hut: 'Reed-hut, reed-hut! Wall, wall! Hear, o reed-hut! Consider, o wall!'

This of course was a cunning subterfuge on the part of the god, who knew that Ziusuddu was asleep in the hut and would hear his words. Indeed, he went on to address him directly:

'Man of Shuruppak, son of Ubardudu, pull down the house, fashion a boat, abandon goods, seek after life! Hate property and save life alive! Bring up all seed of life into the midst of the boat.'

Ziusuddu obeyed, built, pitched and provisioned his ark and explained to his fellow-citizens that the mighty wind-god, Enlil, hated him so that he must no longer dwell in their midst. When he was gone, he added deceitfully, the gods would show them great favour. So he entered with his family into the ark and battened down the hatches. Then an appalling storm broke, among whose black clouds the horrified people beheld the gods themselves brandishing torches.

Brother could not distinguish his brother. Folk could not be seen from the heavens. The very gods feared the deluge. They scurried away. They went up to the heaven of the god An. The gods were cowering like dogs, huddling together on the threshold. The goddess Inanna¹ cried like a woman in labour. Sweet of voice grieved the lady of the gods: 'Let the day turn to clay because I spoke evil in the

¹ The great Sumerian mother-goddess, the Ishtar or Astarte of the Semites.

THE AGE OF PAINTED POTTERY

assembly of gods ! How did I speak evil in the assembly of gods, commanded a hurly-burly for the destruction of my folk ! Do I then give birth to my own folk that as the spawn of fish they should fill the sea ?

The storm and flood raged for six days and seven nights, and Ziusuddu, adrift on the waters, wept bitterly over the destruction of his fellows. Only the great peaks of the Mountain-Barrier rose out of the flood, and on one of these the ark finally grounded and remained fast for a week. Ziusuddu goes on :

At the seventh day's coming I brought out and released a dove. The dove went off. She wandered about, but alighting-place there was none and she returned. I brought out and released a swallow. The swallow went off. She wandered about, but alighting-place there was none and she returned. I brought out and released a raven. The raven went off and saw the abatement of the waters. She fed, wading and dabbling ; did not return. I brought out and sacrificed a sacrifice unto the four winds. I made a drink-offering on the high-place of the mountain ; set forth seven and seven flagons ; strewn below them cane, cedar and myrtle. The gods snuffed the savour, the gods snuffed the sweet savour ! The gods gathered together like flies about the master of the sacrifice ! At last the Divine Lady (i.e. Inanna) at her coming, lifted up the great necklace that the god An had made according to her desire. 'Ye, the gods, even as I forget not the sapphires of my neck, so indeed will I remember these days and not forget them forever. Let the gods come to the sacrifice ; but let not Enlil come to the sacrifice, because he would not be advised, but brought about the deluge and numbered my folk for destruction.' At last, the god Enlil, at his coming, beheld the ship. Enlil was angry. He demanded how any mortal could have escaped. The wise and gentle god of the earth, Enki, began to reason with him.

'Thou chief of gods, thou champion, why, why wouldst thou not be advised but wouldst bring about a deluge ? On the sinner lay his sin, on the trespasser lay his trespass ! Be merciful, that he be not utterly cut off, clement that he be not altogether confounded. Rather than that thou shouldst bring about a deluge, let a lion come and diminish the folk. Rather than that thou shouldst bring about a deluge, let a hyæna come and diminish the folk . . .'

The angry god relented as Enki continued to upbraid his

THE JEMDET-NASR INVASION

hastiness in punishing the many for the sins of the few. Finally—

Enlil came up to the midst of the ship. He took my hand and brought me out, me even. He brought out my wife and caused her to kneel beside me. He touched our foreheads and, standing between us, blessed us. 'Formerly, Ziusuddu was human. But now, Ziusuddu and his wife shall assuredly be like unto us gods. Ziusuddu and his wife shall dwell afar at the mouth of the Rivers.'

Such was the legend whose origin in history may well have been that flood of which we have been speaking. Its close parallelism with the sixth, seventh and eighth chapters of the book of Genesis is too obvious to need discussion. It is quite certain that the Hebrews borrowed the Flood-Story either directly or indirectly from the Sumerians: but, as with so many other of the beliefs and traditions which they received from their neighbours, their moral genius transfigured it. The Sumerian gods remind one of nothing so much as a set of naughty children who are finally so frightened at the mischief they have done that they fall to whimpering and squabbling, each trying to lay the blame upon another. Even Enki and his protégé Ziusuddu are deceitful. But the God of Israel is moved by no ignoble passions. Again, the splendid conception of a covenant between God and man seems a typically Hebrew invention with no parallel in the Sumerian story.

As has been said already, the Flood which destroyed Uruk and Shuruppak, probably not long before or after 3200 B.C., represents the end of the Jemdet-Nasr Period. Whether (as the present writer believes) the original Northern settlers of the Uruk Period were the first Sumerians or not, there is no question whatever that the Sumerians were now the dominant people of the land. Their written history begins at this point and will be studied in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

SUMER AND AKKAD

1. *The Primitive Kings*

As explained in the previous chapter, the Sumerians possessed a detailed historical tradition carrying back to the period immediately after the Flood. This is preserved in the 'King-list', of which the best edition is that composed by the scribe Nur-Ninsubur and now in the Ashmolean Museum. According to Nur-Ninsubur, there ruled over Babylonia, between the Flood and the time of the great king Sargon of Agade, fourteen consecutive dynasties of kings from different cities. His chronicle may be summed up in the following table :

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|----|-------|-------------|--------|-----------|
| I Dyn. of Kish : | 23 | kings | reigned for | 24,510 | years (!) |
| I Dyn. „ Uruk : | 12 | „ | „ | 2,310 | „ |
| I Dyn. „ Ur. | 4 | „ | „ | 177 | „ |
| Dyn. „ Awan : | 3 | „ | „ | 356 | „ |
| II Dyn. „ Kish : | 8 | „ | „ | 3,195 | „ |
| Dyn. „ Hamazi : | 1 | „ | „ | 360 | „ |
| II Dyn. „ Uruk : | 1 | „ | „ | 60 | „ |
| II Dyn. „ Ur : | ? | „ | „ | ? | „ |
| Dyn. „ Adab : | 1 | „ | „ | 90 | „ |
| Dyn. „ Mari : | 6 | „ | „ | 136 | „ |
| ¹ III Dyn. „ Kish : | 1 | queen | „ | 100 | „ |
| Dyn. „ Akshak : | 6 | kings | „ | 93 | „ |
| ¹ IV Dyn. „ Kish : | 4 | „ | „ | 94 | „ |
| III Dyn. „ Uruk : | 1 | „ | „ | 25 | „ |

Now it is obvious at a glance that there is something very badly wrong with these figures. Men do not live a thousand

¹ These two dynasties were really continuous.

THE PRIMITIVE KINGS

years, even when they are kings of Kish. We are reminded of the impossible ages of the Hebrew patriarchs, though Methuselah, with his modest 969 years, was a stripling compared with Etana of Kish who ruled for 1,500 years before making an unsuccessful attempt to fly to heaven on the back of an eagle ! How the figures became so ludicrously corrupt, we cannot say. But the King-list presents an even more serious difficulty than this. Taken as it stands, it tells us that Babylonia was ruled in turn by 74 + x kings before Sargon of Agade, whose date is pretty certainly fixed at round about 2550 B.C. Ignoring the figures given, and allowing the low average of only 20 years per reign, we should arrive at the impossible date of at least 4000 B.C. for the beginning of the I Dyn. of Kish. Recent research has shown conclusively that the whole Early Dynastic Period—*i.e.* the time between the end of the Jemdet-Nasr Period and the accession of Sargon—can hardly have lasted more than 500 years. Obviously, then, the King-list is a most misleading document. But we cannot simply cast it aside as useless, for it is a proven fact that many of the kings of whom it speaks were real persons. Nur-Ninsubur, in fact, was not writing fairy-tales but miswriting history. All historians are now agreed that, instead of each dynasty ruling successively over the whole land, several of them must have been contemporary or have overlapped. The trouble is that the amount of overlap cannot be checked ; that we have no idea which dynasties were contemporary with which. Worse, we possess a good few monuments of kings (notably of Kish) who were obviously important rulers in their day, but whose names do not appear upon the list at all. It is all very disheartening. In the humble opinion of the writer, the King-list as we have it represents an arbitrary and muddle-headed attempt on the part of Sumerian scribes to combine several different local chronicles, embodying the historical traditions of different cities, into a whole. According to his theory, the ' I Dyn. of Uruk ' and ' I Dyn. of Kish ' were contemporary with one another and began to rule in about 3100 B.C., and the next five centuries of Babylonian history were taken up with the struggles between Ur and Uruk to control the South and between Kish and various eastern cities to control the North.

Difficult as is the *relative* chronology of the Early Dynastic Period, its *absolute* chronology—the question of dates B.C.—is more perplexing still. Exact dates, of course, can only be obtained by astronomical calculations based on ancient records of eclipses, etc., but unfortunately, the modern astronomers themselves seem quite unable to agree with one another. The usual starting-point for any attempt to settle the chronology is the beginning (at least 1000 years after the time with which we are now dealing) of the *I Dyn. of Babylon*, which various authorities date at 2049, 2057 or 2170 B.C. In the present volume, the date of 2057 B.C., proposed by the learned German Assyriologist, Prof. Weidner, has been adopted ; but it must be clearly understood that *this is a purely tentative date, adopted simply for convenience, and just as likely to be wrong as right.*

Reckoning backward from this, Prof. Weidner deduces that Sargon of Agade probably came to the throne in about 2637 B.C. ; but this is certainly too early. The present writer, starting from the same dead-reckoning but using slightly different methods, would place him at about 2568 B.C., which is 18 years earlier than the round figure used for convenience by most English scholars ; and by the same process would date the *I Dyn. of Ur* (the earliest dynasty whose monuments have survived until our day) at roughly 2950 B.C. The details of the scheme by which these theoretical dates have been obtained would be wearisome to the reader. Recent excavations—notably by Dr. Frankfort at Eshnunna—prove that they can hardly be further out than about a century ; but the author would be the last person to insist that they are more trustworthy than the slightly different ones employed by other and more eminent historians. In conclusion, let it be repeated that all dates of whatever system are purely tentative and approximate—little more than convenient and conventional labels, and never statements of certain fact of the ‘William the Conqueror, 1066’ order. This, the reader must bear constantly in mind.

Leaving the difficult and (to the layman) rather boring question of chronology, we now examine the geography of ancient Babylonia. The whole country, it will not have been forgotten, consists of a flat and stoneless alluvial plain watered

THE PRIMITIVE KINGS

by the Tigris and Euphrates. The name of *Sumer* (more correctly, *Shumir*), which was originally applied to the whole of this plain, is apparently derived from the Sumerian words *Ki-en-gi*, 'reedy land', referring to the dense thickets of cane that fringe its rivers. In early times, however, the northern part of this plain, from Baghdâd to Babylon—the narrow neck where the rivers approach nearest to one another—became known as *Akkad*, after the city of *Agade*¹ which was the capital of the region; and the phrase *Sumer and Akkad* became the usual denomination of Babylonia as a whole.

The Sumerians conceived the world as a circular island surrounded by the ocean. (This is a further proof that they were intruders into el-'Irâq: such an idea does not at all fit the position of Babylonia, but might well occur to a people dwelling between the Caspian and the Black Sea.) Beyond the ocean-stream lay mysterious and inaccessible mountains, places of darkness and weird creatures. The habitable world was divided into four quarters: in the South, *Sumer and Akkad*; in the North, *Shubartu*, the plain of Assyria and the Mesopotamian steppe; in the west, *Martu*, the Syrian and Arabian deserts, the Lebanons and the fertile Syrian plain; and in the east, *Elam* or *Nim*, the plain of Khûzistan and the Persian Highlands.²

A little ought to be said concerning the population and antiquities of the three foreign quarters of the Sumerian world. *Shubartu* was occupied, apparently from the earliest historical times, by a people called *Shubarians*, to whom later inscriptions often apply the adjective '*far-flung*', indicating that they held a very considerable territory. Concerning *Elam* or *Nim*, 'the Highland', we know rather more. We have learnt that at *Susa* the succession of prehistoric cultures was the same as in Babylonia—Highland Culture, Northern Culture, Jemdet-Nasr Culture: but elsewhere in Persia (especially in the west) the original Highland Culture continued undisturbed. *Susa*, in fact, is really only the extreme south-western outpost of

¹ The exact position of the city of *Agade* is still uncertain. Accordingly, it has not been marked on the maps accompanying this text-book. It cannot have been far from *Kish*.

² See Map II.

SUMER AND AKKAD

Elam and was much more under the influence of Sumerian civilization than was the remainder of the country. In about the XXVI cent. B.C., we shall find that the whole 'land of Elam' was a loose confederation of states owing some sort of allegiance to a King whose capital lay somewhere considerably east of Khûzistan.

Excavations at Susa have shown that the Elamites were decidedly a more civilized people than the Shubarians. They produced works of art (notably some curious carvings in hard asphalt) and had, as already mentioned, their own system of writing, though this eventually was more or less abandoned in favour of cuneiform. They were a hardy, warlike and intelligent race whose prowess in battle was much feared by the men of Sumer. To what extent the close similarity of Elamite and Sumerian civilization was due to racial connection or to the influence of the latter over the former, this is not the place for us to decide.

The centre of Sumerian, as it was of Greek, life was the *city*. Each city with its few miles of surrounding and dependent villages was a political unity having its own laws, constitution, ruler, gods. The cities quarrelled. They fought one another and followed up victory with dominion, one petty prince combining two, three or a dozen cities into a little empire; but sooner or later, the units would disperse again or fall to a fresh conqueror. Only rarely, for a few difficult generations, could a family of gifted princes contrive to bring the whole of Babylonia under a single hand and weld it temporarily into the semblance of a state. Until the time of Sargon of Agade at least, the 'kings' of whom we read in the chronicle of Nur-Ninsubur were kings only of a momentarily-combined handful of cities. The state of Sumer and Akkad in the III millennium B.C. was the state of England in the days of the Heptarchy.

The ruler of each Sumerian city bore the peculiar title of *isag* (formerly read *patesi*, and to be found in that form in most text-books) which may best be rendered into English as *tenant-farmer* or *feoffee*. His office was hereditary and his power, so far as we can ascertain, absolute. But as his title implied, he was not a ruler in his own right but a delegate or

THE PRIMITIVE KINGS

viceroy—the delegate, however, of a more than human overlord, the representative of the city-god. Sumerian religion enters so largely into every aspect of the early history of Babylonia that we have no choice but to take some stock of it here. The Sumerians were most determined polytheists, and a complete list of merely the names of their different gods would fill a book. At the head of their pantheon stood the great trinity of nature-gods, *An*, the sky, *Enlil*, the wind, and *Enki*, the earth and waters. Hardly second in importance to these three comes a whole confusing heaven full of goddesses, whose attributes are in all cases so much alike that it is obvious that they are simply different aspects of one and the same primitive mother-goddess whose worship in el-‘Irâq seems to go back to the time of the Highland Culture.¹ *Innina* or *Ininna*, *Nina*, *Ninhursag*, *Ningal*, *Bau* and *Ninsun* are the names of a very few of the better-known of these goddesses, or rather aspects of the same goddess. Sometimes the goddess appears merely as the wife of a god, sometimes she is worshipped alone. As in other countries, she plays a part in the myth of the ‘dying and resurrected god’. A god—*Dumuzi* (Biblical *Tammuz*) or *Ningishzida* or *Ninazu*—is killed and carried off to the underworld. At once the world is afflicted with drouth and sterility which continues until the goddess, who is sometimes described as his mother, sometimes as his sister, sometimes as his wife and sometimes as all three, goes in search of him, gives him ‘the water of life’ to drink and brings him back to earth again.

Next after the great trinity and the goddesses and ‘dying gods’, we may mention the sungod (*Utu* or *Babbar*) who was also the god of justice, and the moongod (*Nannar* or *Zuen*), who was, oddly, regarded as the father or elder brother of the sun. Finally, we may mention a class of gods whose attributes are so alike that they, too, must surely be simply different aspects of the same primitive divinity. These gods were regarded as young warriors, fierce and exultant in their strength, who slew demons and monsters and were patrons of hunting. To this class belongs *Ninurta* (formerly read *Enurta* or *Ninib*) who was the hero of a kind of creation-legend or epic called *King Storm whose Sheen is Fearful*, which told how he slew a dragon, a great

¹ See Ch. II.

fish and a monstrous bird which were ravaging the earth, and then made the world pleasant for men to live in by 'fixing the destiny of stones and plants' and appointing them to different uses for mankind.

Another god of this kind was *Ningirsu* who was worshipped at Lagash and who is always represented in art as being accompanied by a strange mythical creature, the lionheaded eagle *Imdugud* ('Heavy Storm'); and another was *Nergal*, the god of Kutha, of whom a very queer story was told. Once upon a time, the gods gave a feast and sent a message to their sister *Ereshkigal*, Queen of the Underworld, who never left her own gloomy abode, to send up and fetch her share of the bakemeats. Pleased by this delicate piece of consideration, the goddess sent her grim messenger, *Namtar* (Fate), in whose presence all the gods save *Nergal* stood up, out of respect to his mistress. *Ereshkigal* was furious at *Nergal*'s rudeness, and demanded that he should be handed over to her to put to death. Much against his will, *Nergal* descended to Hades, accompanied by fourteen powerful spirits lent him for the occasion by his father *Enki*. When he reached the fourteen-walled underground city of Hades, he placed one of the spirits in each of its gates to keep them open and cover his retreat. Then he marched boldly into the palace of *Ereshkigal*, dragged her by the hair from her throne and offered to cut off her head. This wholly disconcerted the proud goddess, who promised with tears to make *Nergal* her husband and give him the secret writings of wisdom if he would spare her. The god relented, kissed her and wiped away her tears, and they were married and lived happily ever after. In memory of this exploit, *Nergal* was called *Meslamtaea*, 'He who came forth from Hades'.

Such were the gods of the Sumerians, beings neither more nor less dignified than those who haunt the pages of all early mythologies. The entire pantheon of them was recognized and revered by every city of Sumer and Akkad; but each city had one particular god and one or more particular goddesses who were regarded as its especial patrons and protectors. The chief god of the city was, indeed, its real king and the *isag* was simply his regent and high-priest. His temple, with its great *ziggurat* or artificial high-place, was the central and chief building

of the town. If the *isag* won sufficient victories over other *isags* to justify him in assuming the prouder title of 'king' (*lugal*, lit : 'great man') he ascribed his success to the aid of the god, to whose temple he required his new vassals to make costly offerings. He might even carry away the idols from the temples of conquered cities and place them in his temple as prisoners or vassals of his god ; ¹ in which case the conquered cities considered that they had offended their own gods in some way and that the latter had deliberately 'turned their faces from them' and gone to dwell in a strange place.

Sumerian religious literature is helpful to the historian also in another way, for it is in sacred poems and epics (such as that of the Flood) that the little we know of the Sumerians' own traditions about the earliest historical period has been preserved. As we have seen, the Flood was supposed to have been followed immediately by the *I Dyn. of Kish*. The names of the first twelve kings of this dynasty are meaningless to us. Then comes the interesting statement : *Etana, the shepherd who was conveyed to heaven, who made the countries obedient, was king. He ruled 1500 years*. Now concerning this Etana, a curious legend of later days has been preserved. Once upon a time, it seems, the eagle and the serpent swore a pact of friendship ; but the eagle, treacherously disregarding this, devoured the serpent's young. In rage and grief, the poor snake cried for vengeance to the sungod, who sees and judges all things, and was advised by him to hide in the carcase of a slain ox and seize the eagle when he came to feast on it. This he did and, having plucked off the eagle's wings, cast him into a pit among the mountains to languish miserably. Now, indeed, it was the eagle's turn to cry for pity from the gods. The sungod heard him and was moved, but his divine nature would not permit him to deprive the serpent of a just vengeance. It chanced, however, that at this time Etana of Kish, whose wife was about to bear a child, was seeking a magical plant called 'birth-plant' which could help women in labour ; and he asked the sungod's advice. The god, who knew that this plant grew only in heaven, advised him to go and rescue the eagle and

¹ cf. the capture of the Ark of the Covenant by the Philistines, who put it in Dagon's temple. I Samuel, Chs. V and VI.

nurse him back to health. This he did, and the grateful bird offered to carry him up to heaven. When they had flown for two hours, the eagle said : *' Behold, my friend, how the land is. See the sea around it, the house of the deep. Consider how the land is but a mountain, the sea has turned to a small water ! '* The eagle continued to point out the increasing smallness of the earth at intervals of two hours until they reached the heaven of An and *entered through the gate of An, Enlil and Enki.* But their journey was not over. They had still to reach the throne of the goddess who apparently owned the magic ' birth-plant '. This was too much for Etana. He cried aloud and fell headlong to the distant earth.

This, of course, is a simple fairy-tale. But it is not absolutely inconceivable that Etana (like Arthur or Charlemagne) may have been an historical personage about whom fables came to be told long after his death. After all, the stories which present-day Arabs tell of ' Suleimân-ibn-Dâud ' and his dealings with the *jann* are prodigious enough in all conscience, yet Solomon was a real king in spite of them.

As we have already seen, it is probable that the I Dyn. of Kish and the I Dyn. of Uruk were contemporary with one another. Concerning the latter we have quite a crop of legends. Nur-Ninsubur's account of the dynasty is as follows : *At Eanna (the great temple of Uruk) Meskempasher, son of the sungod, was priest and king. He ruled 325 years. Meskempasher reached the sea and went up to the mountain-top. Enmerkar, son of Meskempasher, the king of Uruk who built Uruk, was king. He ruled 420 years. The god Lugalbanda, a shepherd, ruled 1200 years. The god Dumuzi, a fisherman, whose city was Eridu, ruled 100 years. The god Gilgamesh, whose father was a succubus, the lord of Kullab, ruled 126 years.* A tradition which we cannot fully understand to-day tells us that in the reign of Enmerkar Uruk was attacked by people from Martu (the lands west of Euphrates) and apparently rescued by Lugalbanda. This may very well reflect something that actually took place.

Gilgamesh is the hero of the longest, most interesting and most poetic of all the ancient religious epics of Babylonia, the Iliad or Nibelungenlied of cuneiform literature. So famous was this poem that we find copies of it in every country where

THE PRIMITIVE KINGS

cuneiform writing was understood. It was translated into foreign languages such as Hittite and Shubarian and even left its traces upon Greek myth. The original Sumerian versions of it which have come to light are unfortunately fragmentary ; but by collating the various copies of the later Semitic Babylonian edition, it has been possible to obtain an almost complete text. The following account of the story is based upon the splendid edition of this Semitic text compiled by Dr. Campbell-Thompson.¹

The Epic is divided into twelve ' books ', or rather tablets.

In the first tablet, Gilgamesh (whose father was an incubus, or half-human goblin, and his mother the goddess Ninsun, wife of Lugalbanda) is described as a tyrant whose rule over ' High-walled Uruk ' was so oppressive that the people cried out to the gods to be delivered from him. These accordingly created a strange wild man, *Enkidu*, who should overthrow Gilgamesh. This champion, whose whole body was covered with hair, dwelt in the wilderness among beasts.

*He knew nor folk nor land ; was clad in a garment like the hunting-god.
With the gazelles he ate plants,
With the cattle at the waterhole he consorted.*

The huntsmen of the desert complained to Gilgamesh of the strange creature who terrified them and released the animals from their traps. Gilgamesh accordingly sent out a temple-woman with orders to seduce Enkidu, knowing that if he once lost his innocence the beasts would turn from him as from a common mortal. The girl succeeded in her mission, and when Enkidu turned from her embrace and sought the company of wild things again—

*The gazelles saw him, Enkidu, and fled.
The beasts of the field avoided his person.
For Enkidu had lost the purity of his body.*

Deprived of his old companions, he allowed the girl to

¹ *The Epic of Gilgamesh, text, transliteration and notes*, Oxford, 1930. Dr. Campbell-Thompson has also produced a translation into English hexameters which can be strongly recommended to general readers : *Epic of Gilgamesh*, Luzac, London, 1928.

tempt him back with her to Uruk, which she did by telling him of the prowess of Gilgamesh and arousing his jealousy.

*' Let me, even, challenge him ! I will speak proudly ;
Will cry in the midst of Uruk. " It is I who am mighty.
I, even I, can change destiny.
Great is his strength who was born in the desert ! " '*

Gilgamesh, meanwhile, had been warned in a dream of Enkidu's coming ; but his mother, the goddess Ninsun, interpreted the vision to mean that the two heroes would eventually become friends. In the next tablet, Enkidu, whom the temple-woman had taught how to eat bread, drink beer, anoint himself and generally behave in a civilized manner, reached the city and wrestled with Gilgamesh. Filled with admiration of each other's prowess, the two swore eternal friendship ; and in the third tablet we find them deciding to make an expedition to the *Forest of Cedars*, which is quite certainly in Syria—either in the Taurus Mts., in the extreme north or else in the Lebanons. As has been previously explained, timber, and especially the strong and sweet-smelling cedar, was a most valuable commodity in Babylonia, and there is no doubt that, even in very early times, caravans roamed far afield in search of it. The Forest of Cedars, however, was guarded by a frightful ogre, *Huwawa* or *Humbaba*.

*Huwawa's roar is a tempest,
His mouth fire,
His breath death !*

Some authorities see in this monster the personification of a volcano. The present writer thinks it possible that he may symbolize the scorching and pitiless sandstorms of the Syrian Desert, which the heroes would have to cross in order to obtain their goal. Enkidu at first dreaded the undertaking, but the ambition of Gilgamesh brooked no dissuasion and, despite the warnings of the elders of Uruk and even of the sungod, they fared forth, leaving Ninsun to entreat the sungod on their behalf.

The fourth tablet is mutilated, but it appears that they reached the Forest of Cedars without difficulty. In the

THE PRIMITIVE KINGS

fifth tablet, we find Gilgamesh troubled with strange dreams which Enkidu interpreted as presaging the overthrow of Huwawa. They met the ogre and Gilgamesh prayed to the sungod for help, and the latter loosed eight winds against Huwawa, whose head Gilgamesh then cut off. In the sixth tablet, the heroes returned to Uruk in triumph. But now the goddess *Ininna*, whose lovers were as many as those of the Greek Aphrodite, saw Gilgamesh and desired him. But the champion refused her, rudely reminding her that her previous paramours had all come to an evil end.

*'Once thou didst love a lion, perfect in strength,
But thou didst dig him twice seven pitfalls.
Then thou didst love a stallion, noble in battle,
But thou didst afflict him with bridle, spur and lash . . .'*

In utter fury, the goddess asked her father An to create a 'heavenly bull' which should destroy Gilgamesh. The god replied that to do so would mean seven years' sterility on earth: but *Ininna*, mistress of all growing things, had her answer ready—

*If there be seven years of husks,
I myself will gather corn for the folk;
Increase fodder for the cattle.*

The bull was accordingly created, and though first one hundred, then two and finally three hundred men went up against him, he consumed them with his fiery breath. At last Enkidu seized the bull by the horns and threw him. He and Gilgamesh together then slaughtered him and the latter, rounding upon *Ininna*, insulted her in an even more outspoken fashion than before. The heroes sawed off the horns of the bull, which held thirty measures of oil each, set them in precious lapis-lazuli and hung them in the temple of Lugalbanda. Then they sat down to a feast at which Gilgamesh, like Samson, propounded a riddle—

*'Who is glorious among heroes;
Who is splendid among champions?'
'Gilgamesh is glorious among heroes;
Enkidu is splendid among champions!'*

But the cup of their *hybris* was now full. That night Enkidu dreamed a fearful dream. The beginning of the seventh tablet is mutilated, but from a Hittite translation of the Epic, found at Boghazköi in Asia Minor, it is possible to learn that he saw the gods in council and heard them decide that he must die for his share in killing the bull, whilst Gilgamesh should remain alive. Awakening, he bitterly cursed the temple-woman who had first lured him from the happy innocence of the desert into the dangerous world of men. The Babylonian version goes on to show the sungod rebuking him for this :

*The Sungod heard and opened his mouth : . . .
 ' Why, Enkidu, dost thou curse the temple-woman, the daughter of joy,
 Who made thee eat bread fit for divinity ;
 Made thee drink wine fit for royalty ;
 Clothed thee in a broad mantle
 And gave thee, thee even, the splendid Gilgamesh for a friend ?
 Now verily, Gilgamesh, the companion, thy brother,
 Will cause thee (after death) to lie on a mighty bed.
 On a well-prepared bed he will cause thee to lie,
 And will seat thee on a throne of rest, a seat at his left hand,
 That the Princes of the Dust shall kiss thy feet.
 He will cause the folk of Uruk to weep for thee, to bemoan thee.
 He will appoint thee concubines and people for thy service.'*

The above passage is of the very greatest interest in view of the discoveries made, of late years, at Ur and Kish concerning the terrible burial-customs of the early Sumerians.¹

Enkidu relented and blessed the girl :

' May kings, princes and nobles love thee ! '

He now had a second dream, warning him of the conditions he must expect to find in the underworld when he came—

*To the House from which he who enters comes not forth any more,
 By the road whose track has no turning,
 To the House whose dwellers are deprived of light,
 Where dust is their meat and their bread is clay,
 And like birds they are clothed in a cloak of feathers,
 And sitting in darkness they see not the light.*

¹ See pp. 94-6.

THE PRIMITIVE KINGS

In the eighth tablet, Gilgamesh sought to comfort his dying friend. But the brave Enkidu's strength was ebbing away.

*'How now, what is the sleep that has seized thee?
Thou art darkened and dost not hear me!'
But he never lifted his eyes.
Gilgamesh touched his heart but it did not beat.
He veiled his dead friend like a bride . . .*

Gilgamesh mourned frantically : but soon a keener distress overtook him. Would not he one day die and lie stiff and dumb like his friend ? In terror of this he determined to seek out the remote dwelling of his ancestor Ziusuddu (Noah, see previous chapter) and demand of him the secret of the immortality that had been conferred on him after the Flood. The ninth tablet describes his journey. He had first to climb terrible mountains guarded by *scorpion-men*, archers with human heads and bodies, birds' legs and scorpions' stings. Next he encountered a very peculiar personage, a barmaid or alewife *who dwelt in the depths of the sea*, to whom, in the tenth tablet, he recounted his previous adventures and explained his ambition to gain immortality. The lady's reply was fitting to her occupation and has quite a smack of Omar Khayyám about it.

*'Gilgamesh, why runnest thou abroad?
Thou wilt not find the life that thou seekest.
When the gods made mankind
They appointed death for mankind ;
Clutched life with their own hands.
As for thee, Gilgamesh, let thy belly be full.
Day and night be thou merry . . .
Be thy head washen. Be thou bathed in water.
Pet the child clasping thy hand.
Let the wife be happy in thy bosom.
That, verily, is the lot of mankind !'*

Refusing to be satisfied by this, the hero pressed on until he found the boatman of Ziusuddu whose boat sailed the *Waters of Death*. The text is mutilated at this point, but it seems that, on the boatman's refusing to ferry him across, Gilgamesh in rage destroyed the sails of the boat and plucked out the mast.

SUMER AND AKKAD

The boatman then addressed him in identically the same words as the alewife ; but Gilgamesh refused to be dissuaded, and the boatman finally consented to take him as a passenger if he would cut punt-poles to shift the boat. The Waters of Death were poisonous to whoever touched them, so that he had to throw away a pole after each thrust and take a fresh one. Nevertheless, fifty-two shoves brought him safely across and he stood at last in the presence of the immortal Ziusuddu who was amazed to behold him.

Gilgamesh explained his longing to free mankind from the fear of death, and asked Ziusuddu to tell him how he himself had evaded the common destiny of his race. Ziusuddu, in the eleventh tablet, told him the story of the Flood, which really forms an epic within an epic and which has already been paraphrased in the preceding chapter. He added that if Gilgamesh were really a fit candidate for immortality he would easily be able to go without sleep (sleep is, after all, the miniature of death !) for a week. But instead of passing this simple test, Gilgamesh, weary with his toils, actually slept for a week. Ziusuddu then sent him off with the boatman to a place where he could wash and refresh himself ; and on his return he told him that the immortality he desired might be gained from a certain plant which grew at the bottom of the sea.

*' Its thorns will prick thy hand like the rose.
Yet, if thy hand reach this plant thou shalt find life.'
Gilgamesh, on hearing this, doffed his girdle
And bound heavy stones to his feet.¹
They drew him down into the Abyss and he saw the plant.
He, he even, gathered the plant and it pricked his hand.*

He cut the stones loose and came to the surface. The boatman conducted him, rejoicing, back to the mortal world again. After they had journeyed sixty hours, the hero paused to rest and bathe in a pool.

*A snake smelled the savour of the plant.
It darted out of the water and carried the plant off.*

¹ The pearl-divers in the Persian Gulf do so to-day.

THE PRIMITIVE KINGS

*As it returned to the pool it cast its skin, rejuvenated.¹
Then indeed did Gilgamesh sit down and weep!
Over his cheek went his tears . . .
'For whom has my heart's blood been wasted?
I have done no good to myself;
Have but done good to a brute of the dust!'*

This catastrophe is the real end of the Epic. The highest and bravest type of humanity has made his effort to wrest their guarded secret from the gods, and has failed. Though he has twice defied the powers that be, they have the laugh of him in the end, for he must die sooner or later, and they will endure. The twelfth and last tablet is regarded by Dr. Campbell-Thompson as a late addition to the story. It tells how Gilgamesh, old and miserable, deliberately violated the *tapus* which keep the living from being haunted by the dead, in order that he may see the ghost of his dear Enkidu and learn from him what is the state of man in the hereafter. Nergal, the god who had been to Hades and escaped again (see above), finally opened a hole in the ground and—

*The ghost of Enkidu came out from the earth like a wind.
They embraced without stay (?)
They conversed, sobbing.
'Tell, my friend, tell, my friend,
Tell the laws of the grave which thou hast seen!'
'I will not tell thee, my friend, I will not tell thee,
For if I told thee the laws of the grave which I have seen—thou wouldst
sit weeping!'
'Then let me sit and let me weep!'*

Enkidu's ghost consented to reveal what it knew, and described the horror or corruption, when the body is devoured by worms like an old garment. Only those, it said, at whose grave the living regularly made offerings of food and drink could have rest in the next world. The ghosts of the neglected dead roamed the streets, feeding on offal and drinking the

¹ cf. previous chapter for the connection of the serpent with the secret of immortality in primitive religions. The prickly plant which grew at the bottom of the sea was certainly *coral* which many primitive people have regarded as a 'life-giver'.

water of the gutter. On this note of utter despair, the Epic ends.¹

The Epic of Gilgamesh has been dealt with at this considerable length, partly on account of its extreme interest both as a story and as a very ancient piece of poetry and philosophy, and partly because of the probability that it contains some germs of real historical fact. The present writer, at any rate, has no difficulty at all in believing that Gilgamesh was an actual king of Uruk who reigned over southern Babylonia very shortly before 3000 B.C. He would see, too, a tradition of something that really happened in the story of his journey to the Forest of Cedars. It is interesting to recall that a previous legendary king of Uruk, Enmerkar, was also supposed to have fought against people from the West. Now we shall see presently that, in 2600 B.C. or rather earlier, a fresh race of people (the *Akkadians*) began to make their way into Babylonia. These can only have come from Syria, and it might very easily be their ancestors and fore-runners with whom the early kings of Uruk did battle. The story of the Search for Immortality is, of course, the common property of most ancient religions. Doubtless it was known to the Sumerians from the earliest times and only came later to be associated with the name of Gilgamesh.

According to Nur-Ninsubur, Gilgamesh was succeeded on the throne of Uruk by his son Ur-Nungal, who reigned 30 years. The remaining five kings of the dynasty all had reigns of purely human length. No monuments of theirs have so far been recovered, but there seems no reason at all to doubt that they are real persons.

2. *Early Historical Remains*

We may now enquire what actual remains of this semi-legendary period of Babylonian history the digger's spade has brought to light. A peculiar feature of the age is the abandon-

¹ A recently-discovered addition to the Epic shows that Gilgamesh did eventually die and became (like Rhadamanthus in the Greek myth) one of the Judges of Hades.

EARLY HISTORICAL REMAINS

ment of the old flat rectangular bricks of baked or unbaked clay or cement, with which all buildings had previously been constructed, in favour of what are technically called *planoconvex bricks* : i.e. small bun-shaped bricks, flat on one side and rounded on the other, rather like cobblestones. The reason for this change is unknown. The new bricks were far clumsier and less satisfactory than the old ones and required a generous use of mud-mortar to hold them together. They continued to be used exclusively, however, for above two centuries.

Probably the oldest and certainly the finest artistic relics of this period are those found by the Oriental Institute of Chicago's expedition at *Eshnunna* (Tell Asmar) in N.E. Akkad.¹ Here, a temple dating from the beginning of the Early Dynastic Period has been unearthed—a small square building, not unlike an ordinary dwelling-house in plan and far less impressive than the older temples at Uruk, consisting of a lobby with stairs leading to the flat roof, an antechamber containing the laver in which the worshipper must cleanse himself before entering the presence of the gods and a large central room or court, grouped round which were the three actual sanctuaries apparently dedicated to the god *Abu* (' Lord of plants ', another name for *Dumuzi*), his wife the mother-goddess and their son. These shrines consisted of narrow rooms, each with a brick pedestal for the idol at the far end. Buried beneath the floor of the goddess' sanctuary were found a number of most interesting objects which had been consecrated to her as offerings and then disposed of in this way when they were no longer needed. These included a lovely necklace of serpentine and alabaster ; fragments of vases of the same materials, seals of various fine stones and several broken human figures exquisitely carved from shell and mother-of-pearl and intended as inlays for plaques of stone or hard asphalt.

The artistic merit of all these was very high ; but the discovery paled into unimportance beside that made beneath the floor of *Abu's* shrine. Here, carefully buried because they had gone out of date and been replaced by others, was found a hoard of no less than a dozen magnificent stone statues, including the actual idols of the god and goddess. Though

¹ See Map II.

SUMER AND AKKAD

crude in some respects, these limestone and alabaster images, ranging in height from one to two-and-a-half feet, astonish one both by the technical competence and the true æsthetic feeling which their workmanship displays. Noteworthy among them are two representing worshippers about to pour libations to the god. These must surely be actual—and very faithful—portraits of the men who dedicated them.¹ Others of the same sort are of less perfect workmanship and may well be older. The idols themselves are somewhat crude and ill-proportioned : but in one respect they show an amazing virtuosity on the part of the sculptor of five thousand years ago, for the legs, instead of being carved in a single piece as is the case with all other ancient statues, are cut boldly separate, the feet wide apart ; and yet support the whole weight of the statues without the aid of any plinth or strut. Another fascinating peculiarity is the naturalistic treatment of details. The dark wavy hair and the full beards of the men are, in most cases, reproduced by a coating of black pitch. The eyes are inlaid, the white being of shell or frit and the pupils of pitch or black limestone. The eyebrows are similarly treated and the result of the whole is one of almost startling realism. This marvellous discovery has given us a perfect idea of what the Sumerians of 3000 B.C. actually looked like. The best of the statues are undoubtedly careful portraits of living men. If their originals could be raised before us in the flesh we should know them immediately.

It has long been recognized that two different racial types can be distinguished both in Sumerian sculpture and in the actual remains obtained from graves. One type belong to what anthropologists call the *Armenoid Race*, whose original home is generally supposed to have been Asia Minor. Its characteristics are a *roundish* skull, low forehead, large prominent nose and slightly receding chin. If we are right in thinking that it is the Uruk Period which marks the first arrival of the Sumerians in el-'Irâq, then, since the typical culture of that period is known to have originated in Asia Minor, it seems reasonable to conclude that these Armenoid people are the true Sumerians. But not all authorities would agree to this. The other type belongs to what is called the *Mediterranean Race*

¹ See opposite.



[By courtesy of the *British Museum*]
VOTIVE STATUE OF AN EARLY SUMERIAN ABOUT TO MAKE A LIBATION TO THE GODS
From Eshnunna date c. 3000 B.C. or earlier.
(see p. 301)



IDOIS OF THE GOD ABU AND HIS CONSORT
From Eshnunna—early Dynastic period.
(See p. 86)

EARLY HISTORICAL REMAINS

and is characterized by a *long narrowish* skull and small, rather delicate features.¹

In statues from Eshnunna, the Armenoid (*i.e.* in the present writer's opinion, the pure Sumerian) type predominates. The men wear full wavy beards, moustaches and long hair which is parted in the middle and either left loose on the shoulders or, more often, arranged in two long plaits like those worn by the desert Arab of el-'Irâq to-day. Their costume is puzzling. Apparently it consisted of a kilt of sheepskin, worn with the fleece sometimes outside and sometimes inside, and a girdle round the waist. The upper part of the body is bare, but we know from other sculptures that it could be covered with a sheepskin plaid. The women wore a curious one-piece cloak, probably of linen, passing under the right arm and fastened, doubtless with a pin, on the left shoulder. Their hair, presumably worn in plaits, was dressed up on the head in a most peculiar fashion recalling nothing so much as the 'halo-hats' which were popular recently with English ladies. One has the impression of a stocky, powerfully-built and not particularly handsome race, sallow-skinned, with dark eyes and luxuriant black hair and beards, rippling but not curly or fuzzy. In this respect it is interesting to note that the Sumerians commonly called themselves *Sakuga*, 'The Blackheaded Folk'.

Since the Eshnunna discoveries, another important find of early and splendid Sumerian statues has been made by a French expedition at *Mari* on the Middle Euphrates.

Probably slightly older than the Eshnunna temple, since they are built with a mixture of planoconvex and rectangular bricks, are the ruins of buildings surrounding the *ziggurat* or stage-tower of the temple of the god Nannar at Ur. As we have seen, there is evidence that the *ziggurat* was in existence as early as the Uruk Period: but the whole precinct seems to have been rebuilt very shortly before 3000 B.C., according to the chronology provisionally employed in this book. The broad platform on which the *ziggurat* stood was enclosed with a buttressed retaining-wall. A building measuring rather more than 60 by 50 ft., containing seven rooms and a central courtyard, was

¹ The distinguished anthropologist Sir Arthur Keith considers that these are the true Sumerians and the direct ancestors of the modern 'Irâqis.

erected at its north corner. This was obviously a temple, though no objects of any sort were found in it. It was adjoined by a range of narrow chambers which probably served as storerooms.

Apparently slightly later in date than the remains so far described, but still earlier than 2950 B.C., is the most impressive early Sumerian building at present known, the great palace discovered in 1923 by Mr. Mackay in the *tell* known as 'Mound A' at Kish, and excavated by him and Prof. Langdon on behalf of Oxford University and the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago. This wonderful building consisted of two distinct wings. The smaller, and apparently older, portion covered an area of more than 2,000 sq. yards and had at one end a cloister or portico, formed by a low balustrade running parallel to the outer wall and having four large round columns of brick springing from it, doubtless to support a roof of timber and matting. The main hall of the building was nearly 90 ft. in length, and its roof was also supported by brick columns. Here, perhaps, the kings of Kish gave audience to their subjects. The walls of one of the chambers giving upon the cloister had been decorated in a charming fashion, of which the Sumerians were particularly fond, with friezes of carved slate and slate plaques inlaid with white limestone. Only a few fragments of these were recovered, but the friezes had evidently shown contrasting scenes of peace and war, for we have figures of sheep and cattle, and of persons milking them, and also bound and naked captives with their hair and beards dressed in the style of the Eshnunna statues. The artistic merit of these figures is not great, but they must have made a quite effective decoration.

At a somewhat later period, a huge new block of rooms, nearly double the area of the original building, was added to the east side of this palace. The new wing, which was surrounded by an *enceinte* wall about 10 ft. thick, stood on a slightly higher level and was entered by a grand ornamental staircase leading through a gateway composed of four diminishing recesses. Near this gateway were found the remains of another slate-and-limestone frieze showing captives in charge of a bearded warrior, who carries an odd curved battleaxe in his

hand and wears a head-dress vaguely suggestive of an old-fashioned soldier's shako of about the period of Waterloo.

It is natural to assume that we have here the royal residence of the kings of the I Dyn. of Kish, and we are probably safe in doing so. But a puzzling fact is that a few precious cuneiform inscriptions, carved by very early rulers of Kish, have survived until our time ; and that the names of these monarchs do not coincide with those given in the King-list. If the author's contention that that list is really a mixture of several separate documents be correct, then we must suppose that the Kish document is the least reliable of them. Probably the earliest of these old inscriptions is that on a broken sandstone vase, found by American excavators at Nippur, which commemorates *Utug isag of Kish, son of Bazuzu, conqueror of the land of Hamazi*. It is very strange that Utug should call himself merely *isag* and not king. He must have been a fairly powerful ruler to have conquered Hamazi, which was a district lying east of the Tigris, probably on the Persian frontier.

We may now consider the first incident in Sumerian history of which we have any really clear contemporary record. Many years ago, French excavators at *Lagash* on the Shatt-el-Hayy discovered a large mace-head of white limestone roughly carved with a continuous frieze of lions tearing at each other's haunches (a favourite *motif* in Sumerian art) and with the lion-headed eagle, Imdugud. On the bodies of the lions was carved in archaic characters the inscription : *Mesilim, king of Kish, builder of a temple for the god Ningirsu, has dedicated this to Ningirsu, Lugalshagengur being isag of Lagash*. Now a long historical inscription written in about 2700 B.C., which purported to give a summary of the wars between Lagash and the neighbouring city of *Umma* and which will be quoted frequently in the following pages, says : *Mesilim, king of Kish, at the word of his goddess Kadi (?)*,¹ *set up a boundary-stone in that place for the protection of that district* (the ownership of which was disputed between Lagash and Umma). Finally, the American excavations in the temple called E-shar at *Adab* (Bismâyya) yielded two further inscriptions on stone vessels dedicated in that sanctuary by Mesilim. Evidently, Mesilim of Kish was a very

¹ The reading of this goddess' name is quite uncertain.

powerful king who lived at some time between 3000 and 2900 B.C., and who had actually made himself master not only of Akkad but also of the important cities of Adab, Umma and Lagash in Sumer proper. One naturally assumes that he belonged to the I Dyn. of Kish, and looks for his name in the chronicle of Nur-Ninsubur—in vain.

Probably it was at about this time that the earliest building discovered at Lagash was put up. This odd structure consisted of a rectangular platform of bricks, measuring some 40 by 26 ft., standing on a brick pavement and crowned by a small two-roomed building, the floor of whose larger room was sunk below the level of the platform, so that it could only have been entered by means of a ladder. The place was probably a granary.

We now reach at last the earliest period at which it is possible to link up the evidence of the King-list with that of the monuments. According to Nur-Ninsubur, after the last king of the I Dyn. of Uruk, Lugalkiaga, had reigned for 36 years, *Uruk was smitten by the sword. Its kingship was removed to Ur. At Ur, Mesannipadda was king. He ruled 80 years. Meskem-Nannar, son of Mesannipadda, was king. He ruled 36 years. Elulu ruled 25 years. Balulu ruled 36 years. Four kings ruled these 177 years. Ur was smitten by the sword. Its kingship was removed to Awan.* Now in 1923, Sir Charles (then Dr.) Woolley, continuing the work of the late Dr. Hall at Tell-el-'Ubeid near Ur, found, among the ruins of an early Sumerian temple, a small white marble tablet bearing the name of the goddess *Ninharsag* and, beneath it, the following words: *Aannipadda King of Ur, son of Mesannipadda king of Ur, has built a temple for Ninharsag.* Here was a discovery of capital importance. Not only did it provide us with our earliest link between the monuments and the King-list, but it corrected an error on the part of the latter. Obviously, Meskem-Nannar was the grandson of Mesannipadda, not his son. The confusing similarity of the names had led to Aannipadda's being dropped from the list and his reign being added to that of his father, who was thus credited with the improbable *floruit* of 80 years.

A few more inscriptions of these two rulers have turned up at el-'Ubeid and Ur itself. Of Mesannipadda, no actual monuments were found, but a cylinder-seal of lapis-lazuli, carved

EARLY HISTORICAL REMAINS

with pictures of combats between men, lions, bulls and stags, bears the name of *Lady Nintur* (or *Nindumu*) *wife of Mesannipadda*, and a piece of clay which had once been used for stopping the mouth of a jar shows clearly the impression of another seal, most intricately and beautifully carved with a similar scene. The inscription on this calls Mesannipadda, *king of Kish*. It was probably he who overthrew the I Dyn. of Kish. Two other inscriptions of Aannipadda were found at el-'Ubeid : a handsome gold bead bearing his name, and a broken vase with a legend stating that it had been presented to Aannipadda by a certain Ur-Nannar.

More interesting than these is a curious copper peg which had been in the British Museum for many years before the discovery of el-'Ubeid. So badly obliterated is the inscription on this object that it was only a few years ago that Mr. C. J. Gadd managed to read the name of Aannipadda in it. The text is almost impossible to translate. It might perhaps be interpreted as recording the dedication of shrines to Enki and another god and to the *heavenly serpent, the goddess Inanna*, and the performing of ceremonies of purification for these divinities by *their king, the god Aannipadda*. The fact that Aannipadda calls himself a god need not at all surprise us. King-worship has been a feature of very many ancient societies. The Pharaohs of Egypt enjoyed a quadruple divinity, being identified with the guardian deities of Upper and Lower Egypt and with the sky-god Horus, and being also considered as actual sons of the sungod Re'. *Divus* was an ordinary title of the Roman Cæsars. The worship of the Mikado is part of the state religion of Japan to-day. That the same practice was followed in early Sumer is proved both by Aannipadda's inscription and by the presence of various gods and demi-gods in the early King-list. It went out of fashion during the next four centuries, but was revived by Sargon of Agade.

The temple which Aannipadda built for the goddess Nin-harsag at el-'Ubeid was small but very richly decorated. According to the theoretical reconstruction proposed by the excavators, who took careful note of the exact position of every fallen piece of ornament, it stood on a tall raised platform faced with containing walls of planoconvex bricks which were

ornamented with recesses in the usual Sumerian style and rested upon crude limestone foundations. It had either two or three doors and was approached by two projecting flights of stone steps. The main door was guarded by figures of lions made of sheet-copper hammered over a moulded core of asphalt, and was surmounted by a superb frieze, also of copper on asphalt, showing the lionheaded eagle grappling two stags in its claws. This beautiful work of art (which has been restored and placed on exhibition in the British Museum) is as impressive as the Eshnunna statues and shows an even greater technical ability. Copper bulls seem to have stood along the foot of the front wall, which was adorned with friezes of shell and limestone set in asphalt. Among the ruins was found a very crude squatting statue of a man, a work not to be compared with the Eshnunna sculptures; and the fragment of a second statue bore an inscription stating that *Kurlil, keeper of the granary at Uruk*, had dedicated a temple to the goddess Damgal-nun. Doubtless it was part of the spoil Mesannipadda took when he sacked Uruk. Buildings of the same period were found at Ur itself. The ancient temple on the corner of the *ziggurat* platform was refounded, and a larger building, now hopelessly ruined, arose to the south-west of the platform.

Of the last three kings of the dynasty we know precisely nothing. The power of Ur declined in their day, for reasons which will be shown later.

It is in connection with the I Dyn. of Ur that we must notice by far the most important discovery made by the Joint Expedition at that side—the famous ‘*Royal Cemetery*’ with its fabulous treasures of gold and its clear evidence of human sacrifice. So much has been written, both in newspapers and popular text-books, concerning this truly sensational find, that the present writer feels himself excused from describing it in any detail. Everyone has seen photographs of the glorious golden helmet of Meskalamdug and the fantastically elaborate diadem of Shubad. Everyone has read accounts of the so-called ‘death-pits’ in which were huddled the skeletons of manservants and maidservants who had attended their masters and mistresses in death as they did in life. Like the Egyptians, the early Sumerians took with them to the grave supplies of every earthly

EARLY HISTORICAL REMAINS

necessity, from food and drink to chariots, thrones and instruments of music. The amount of material found in these graves—of which nearly 2,000 were excavated—is positively overwhelming, and sheds a blaze of light upon the extraordinarily advanced culture of the Early Dynastic Period. Particularly astonishing is the skill displayed in all types of metal-work, and the immense wealth of imported metal possessed by the inhabitants.

The tombs, which were dug in what was originally a great rubbish-tip lying outside the walls of the primitive town, fall into two classes, 'private' graves and graves with human sacrifices. The former consisted of oblong pits in which the corpse lay on its side with bent limbs, either enclosed in a coffin of basket-work or terracotta or wrapped in matting, and accompanied by numerous offerings. From these graves were obtained gold bandlets for the forehead, bracelets and big earrings of gold, silver or copper, necklaces of gold, silver, cornelian and lapis beads, copper and silver axeheads of the finest workmanship and superb spearheads, some leaf-shaped and others square in section, which display the greatest skill in casting. Little conical vanity-cases of metal, with forceps, pick and ear-cleaner attached, are as modern in conception as in execution. Sometimes the bones had been scorched by a fire lit in the grave near the head, and in this we must see a survival of the cremation-rites of the Jemdet-Nasr Period.¹

Splendid as were the contents of these private graves, they grow insignificant when compared with the wealth of the great 'death-pits', in which multitudes of human and animal sacrifices and rich furnishings were disposed about the floor of a great pit, at one end of which was a chamber of brick or stone containing the remains of the royal or sacred personage in whose honour so many lives and so much treasure had been committed to the dust. One of these tombs—that of an unnamed woman—may be briefly described here by way of example. The body, wearing an elaborate head-dress of gold and clasping in its hands an exquisite fluted gold tumbler, was laid to rest at the bottom of a deep shaft, in a small domed chamber of rough limestone blocks which was found intact by

¹ cf. Ch. II.

the excavators and which is the earliest example of a dome known in the world. Four manservants were killed, or voluntarily laid down their lives, and their corpses placed by that of their mistress. The chamber was then sealed and three sheep slaughtered before its door. The pit was now filled in up to the top of the dome and fires were lit above it and burnt-offerings made. The upper part of the shaft was next lined with mud-brick and filled with layers of trampled clay, forming a succession of floors on each of which offerings contained in clay pots were laid out, the three uppermost layers being accompanied by one human sacrifice apiece. On the topmost layer was also placed a wooden box containing two gold-bladed daggers with hilts of lapis-lazuli studded with gold and a cylinder-seal of carved shell inscribed with the name of *King Meskalamdug*.

Other and even richer tombs (one of them containing no less than 74 human victims) have yielded a vast mass of precious objects, most of which must be thoroughly familiar to the reader from photographs in the press. We may cite particularly the glorious drinking-vessels, wine-strainers and toilet accessories in chased gold, the extraordinary gold and silver head-dresses and the harps adorned with great animals' heads in gold and lapis from the grave of *Lady Shubad*, the silver boat and the superb fragments of a copper shield with figures of lions in *répoussé* belonging to a certain *Abargi*, and the famous 'standard'—an extraordinary object of wood, inlaid on two sides with scenes of a battle and a feast in polychrome mosaic, the recovery and reconstruction of which was one of the greatest triumphs of Sir Charles Woolley's skill. Four-wheeled wagons each drawn by three oxen, superb stone vessels, golden daggers, spears and axes of electrum (gold-silver alloy), lovely miniature animals of gold, soldiers' helmets of copper, curious inlaid gaming-boards, beads and ornaments of every description are amongst the other precious objects yielded in staggering profusion by this El Dorado of the dead.

Two main questions are to be asked concerning this wonderful cemetery: Who were the persons, whose death necessarily involved the death of so many others? And what is their date? In answer to the first, it is natural to assume that these

EARLY HISTORICAL REMAINS

are the graves of a family of kings and queens, and indeed they are commonly spoken of as 'Royal Tombs'. But there is an objection to this. Five tombs with human sacrifices were discovered, and of these only one belonged to a man—Abargi, who does not bear the title 'king'. Shubad, whose tomb was perhaps the richest of all, does have the title 'lady', which was equivalent to 'queen', and judging by the close connection between their tombs, she may have been Abargi's wife. On the other hand, Meskalamdug is known, from his seal found in the tomb of an unknown woman, to have been a king. Yet his grave (with objects bearing his name without title) has been found. It was immensely rich—containing, amongst other things, the famous golden helmet in the form of a wig, unquestionably the finest example of ancient goldwork in the world—but it contained no human victims. On the other hand, a tomb found at Kish which had four-wheeled chariots, great copper vessels and human sacrifices apparently belonged to a man. In the writer's opinion, the tombs with human victims are those of priests and priestesses (doubtless of royal blood) who had had the honour of impersonating the moongod and his wife at the annual ceremony called by mythologists the 'Sacred Marriage'.

The question of the *date* of the tombs is one of the most hotly debated in modern archæology. Sir Charles Woolley divides the whole cemetery into three distinct epochs: (1) graves of the time of the Dyn. of Agade—probably about 2550–2450 B.C., (2) graves contemporary with the cemetery called 'Cemetery A' at Kish, and (3) the earliest graves including the 'Royal Tombs'. Between stages (2) and (3) the cemetery would appear to have gone out of use for a time, so that a stratum of rubbish accumulated above the oldest graves. Judging by objects belonging to the I Dyn. of Ur which he found in this rubbish, Sir Charles Woolley claims that the 'Royal Tombs' are considerably older than that dynasty (which he dates as high as 3200 B.C.) and puts the oldest of them as far back as 3500 B.C.¹ In support of this high date, he claims that the practice of human sacrifice is never mentioned in cuneiform writings, and so must have died out very early

¹ That would be 3250 B.C. by the date given the I Dyn. in this text-book.

indeed. But this is not true, for as we saw at the beginning of this chapter the Epic of Gilgamesh contains a plain reference to the custom. The date of 3500 B.C. has been rejected strenuously by all other authorities, who have pointed out that the art, the style of writing *etc.* of the objects from the tombs is indistinguishable from that of the I Dyn. and that the names of Meskalamdug, Akalamdug (written on a seal found in the cemetery) and Abargi so closely resemble those of Mesannipadda, Aannipadda and Meskem-Nannar (more correctly Meskiag-Nannar) that the two families must be related. Further, the stage (2) of the cemetery is contemporary, as we saw, with 'Cemetery A' of Kish, which can be dated with pretty good accuracy to about 2800 B.C. or later. Another objection to the high dating is the fact—first pointed out by the author's lamented friend, the late Miss W. M. Crompton of Manchester University Museum—that many of the stone vases from the cemetery are practically identical in shape with Egyptian vases of I Dyn. and later—*i.e.* from 3400 to 2980 B.C. or thereabouts. Since both Egyptians and Sumerians traded with Syria, it is natural that the art of one country should already have begun indirectly to influence that of the other.

Finally, metal vases of types known from the 'Royal Tombs' were found by Dr. Frankfort at Eshnunna in a building which he thinks cannot be older than 2800 B.C. All things considered, it seems that the objections to the high date of 3500 B.C. are insuperable, and that the Royal Tombs must be placed in the III millennium: though whether just *before* the I Dyn. of Ur (say 3000 B.C.) or contemporary with it, the evidence is insufficient for us to say.

Indeed, the tombs are typical of all the early relics of Sumerian civilization, in that they tell us at once so much and so little; dazzle us with the picture of a mature, wealthy and brilliant culture, yet obstinately refuse to tell us what we should most like to know about it. For our first glimpse of accurate and detailed Sumerian history we must turn to a less sensational but even more important group of finds—the great mass of inscriptions discovered by the French excavators before the War at Lagash.

3. *The Isags of Lagash*

Actually, the oldest known inscription from Lagash is a stone tablet, now in America, which is carved with a list of real-estate holdings purchased by *Enhegal, king of Lagash*, who must have reigned shortly before Lugalshagengur, the *isag* who was vassal to Mesilim of Kish. As previously explained, all the oldest Sumerian documents seem to be inventories or records of business transactions. It was only at a later date that the kings and *isags* began to dedicate in the temples of the gods inscriptions recording their works of piety and incidentally—as it were in parenthesis—mentioning their secular achievements, their victories and reforms.

Not very long after the time of Mesilim and Lugalshagengur, we find the throne of Lagash occupied by a certain Ur-Nina,¹ founder of the powerful dynasty whose inscriptions are of such value to us to-day. Most authorities agree that this king is to be dated round about 2900 B.C. The present writer feels that about 2870 B.C. would actually be a probable date for his accession and that he was roughly contemporary with Meskiag-Nannar of Ur. No less than 18 inscriptions of this king are known, all of which record his pious acts in building temples and dedicating statues and offerings to the gods. The following example summarizes these works.

Ur-Nina king of Lagash, son of Gunidu son of Gursar, built the temple of the goddess Nina ;² formed the statue of Nina ; carved the statue ; dedicated the statue to Nina ; brought it into the shrine. Forty priestesses of Nina were chosen by omens. He made the Canal of the Plain ; built (the building called) Ninnig ; built E-pa (the ziggurat of the god Ningirsu) ; built the wall of Lagash ; formed the statue of the god Lugaluru ; gathered timber from Dilmun (?), the mountain. Dilmun, if this be really the place referred to, was, as we have seen, the Persian coast of the Gulf with the island of Bahrên, so we see the Sumerian princes of the XXIX cent. B.C. already sending out mercantile fleets in search of the com-

¹ Or Ur-Nanshe, as it now appears that the name should be read.

² Or Nanshe.

modities that their own land so sorely wanted. In all, the king claims to have built or restored eleven temples and holy places. One of these was certainly the curious granary previously described, which he rebuilt in its entirety, laying down a new and larger platform above the old one. His other works included the digging of canals and the building of a gate. The statues which he dedicated in his different temples cannot, one fears, have been objects of any considerable beauty. Several pieces of sculpture have survived from his day, and they compare most unfavourably with the statues from Eshnunna which are probably about 150 years older. A curious little peg-shaped alabaster figure about eight inches high, which is in the Semitic Museum of Harvard University, bears his name and is apparently an attempted portrait. It shows a clean-shaven man of typically Sumerian appearance, wearing a long mane of hair which is flung back from the shoulders and hangs down almost to the waist. This is probably a wig, as in other sculptures the king is shown with the shaved poll of a priest. The Louvre possesses some stone plaques, probably meant for the decoration of walls, sculptured in bas-relief with effigies of Ur-Nina and his family. Artistically they are contemptible, but they have a good deal of archæological interest. On one of them we see the king carrying a basket of earth on his head like a common workman—a symbolic way of expressing his devotion to the gods in rebuilding their temples. His sons, who invariably appear with him on these sculptures, were eight in number. Akurgal, the eldest, eventually succeeded him. Other members of his court who have been similarly immortalized were his stewards or cup-bearers, Anita and Sagantug, his secretary, Namazu, Banar, whose title of *mushlah-gal* is perhaps to be interpreted as ‘chief snake-charmer’, and Dudu, the high-priest of Ningirsu. This interesting glimpse of court-life in the XXIX cent. B.C. shows us a fully-organized machine or government from which, in a later age, a complicated bureaucracy was to be evolved. Another curious monument of Ur-Nina was dug up not very long since at Ur. It is a mottled granite tablet about 9 inches high which must easily be the ugliest piece of sculpture in the world. The stone had proved too hard to carve, so the figures of the enthroned king

and his attendant were produced by grinding the surface. Both design and execution are childish to a degree. The monument was probably carried off from Lagash as a trophy.

Of Akurgal, son and successor of Ur-Nina, we have no monuments, but his son *Eannatum* (whose name was formerly read Eannadu) was the most powerful and important ruler of his dynasty, the first great conqueror in the history of a land always prolific of conquerors. We are probably fairly safe in supposing that he lived shortly before 2800 B.C. A comprehensive list of his victories is given on an inscribed memorial-stone which he set up and which is now in the Louvre. The historical section of this runs as follows :

Eannatum defeated Elam, the fearful mountain ; heaped up its burial-cairns. Shunir isag of Urua, made a stand before that city (?).¹ *He defeated him ; heaped up its burial-cairns. He defeated Umma ; heaped up its twenty burial-cairns ; gave back to the god Ningirsu his beloved field, Guedin. He defeated Uruk ; defeated Ur ; defeated Ki-Utu ; ravaged Uruaz ; slew its isag ; ravaged Mishime ; ruined Arua. By Eannatum, chosen by name of Ningirsu, all countries were brought low. In the year when the king of Akshak came up against him, Eannatum, chosen by name of Ningirsu, chased Zuzu king of Akshak from the Antasurra of Ningirsu back to Akshak ; overthrew him . . . to Eannatum isag of Lagash the goddess Ininni, who loves him, has given the kingship of Kish over and above the isag-ship of Lagash . . . Eannatum, isag of Lagash, the world-conqueror of Ningirsu, repulsed Elam, Shubartu and the city of Urua from the Suhur canal ; repulsed Kish, Akshak and Mari from the Antasurra of Ningirsu . . .*

The conquests claimed by this formidable prince are very extensive. The first campaign was probably the result of one of those plundering forays which the Elamites of W. Persia were accustomed to make into el-'Irâq. We know that there were Shubarians dwelling among the peaks of the mountain-barrier as well as in the great plains north of Babylonia, and it was doubtless with the latter that the Elamites were in alliance. We have more information about the next campaign which was directed against Umma. Among the most precious treasures

¹ Translation of this sentence doubtful : *The isag of Urua set up his standard before that city, is also possible.*

of the Louvre are the fragments—alas!—of a great round-topped stela ¹ of white limestone that must, when complete, have measured at least six feet high by four feet wide, and that, for reasons which will presently be apparent, is called by modern archæologists the *Stèle des Vautours* or Stela of the Vultures. This splendid monument was sculptured on both faces with inscriptions and bas-reliefs showing, on one face, scenes of the actual battle against Umma and, on the other, a mystical representation of the god Ningirsu bringing about the defeat of that city. The text, when complete, gave a full account of the war and the circumstances leading up to it. Though much is now lost, we are able, with the help of the later chronicle of the relations between the two cities which has been quoted before, to patch up the following story.

In the reign of Akurgal, father of Eannatum, the men of Umma forgot the covenant which had been made between them and Lagash under the auspices of king Mesilim of Kish, and, under their *isag* (whose name seems to have been Ush), invaded the boundary-territory known as Guedin. Apparently they were repulsed; but they made another foray soon after the accession of Eannatum. The latter prayed Ningirsu to disclose his will in the matter, and the god appeared to him in a dream, standing by his head and telling him that if he fought against Umma the sungod would go at his right hand. The *isag* accordingly took the field, killed 3,600 of the enemy and cut his way into Umma itself *like an ill wind*. From a difficult fragment of the great stela, it seems that Umma may have been allied with Kish and that the king of Kish took the field in person and was killed by Eannatum. After the battle, Eannatum, according to the later account, behaved very fairly. *With Enakalli, isag of Umma, he delimited the ground. He brought that canal (the canal in question may actually be the Shatt-el-Hayy) from the Great River to Guedin. He cut off two hundred-and-ten-and-a-half 'cords' ² in the direction of Umma for the domain of Ningirsu; established it as a kingless (i.e., neutral) domain. At that canal he inscribed a boundary-stela. The boundary-stela of*

¹ The Greek word *stela*, meaning a gravestone, is used technically for any ancient monument that takes the form of an upright stone slab.

² A measure of length.

THE ISAGS OF LAGASH

Mesilim was returned to its place. He did not move it further toward the territory of Umma.

The sculptures on the stela are even more interesting than the inscriptions. On one side, the god Ningirsu was depicted, folding a helpless crowd of enemies in a net. The head of one of these wretches (who represent, of course, the men of Umma) protrudes through the meshes, and upon it the colossal mace of the god is shown in the act of falling. A goddess, doubtless his wife Bau, stood admiringly behind him. Elsewhere, the god was shown riding in his chariot. The reverse side of the stela showed earthly activities closely paralleling these heavenly ones. Here, Eannatum himself took the place of Ningirsu. We see the armies of Lagash in battle-array and on the march. The former scene showed the *isag* in kilt and plaid, standing at the head of his serried ranks. To our astonishment, we see that the *phalanx*—that irresistible military formation, to whose weight and staying-power the victories of Alexander the Great were chiefly due—was known in Sumer forty-seven centuries ago. The soldiers, who wear pointed metal helmets coming down over neck and ears and recalling the modern German *Stahlhelm*, stand in a close-packed mass, their huge rectangular shields (apparently of metal, since they bear round bosses) overlapping and their long lances protruding from behind them. Since each lance is held with two hands, it is evident that the shield-bearers stood encircling the spearmen. The spears project in six rows, so that the *phalanx* must have been seven ranks deep. The formidable qualities, both for attack and defence, of this compact squadron of heavy-armed troops can be imagined. Twenty-five centuries later, the Macedonian *phalanx*, when outnumbered by hundreds to one, went through the Persian army as a knife goes through butter.

In the lower scene, the army marches at ease, without shields, the men who probably carried the shields when in action being armed with tomahawks. Eannatum himself rides ahead in his chariot. This is damaged, but by referring to an almost contemporary mosaic (the so-called 'standard') from the 'Royal Tombs' at Ur we can reconstruct the vehicle without difficulty. The chariots of these days were of wood and four-wheeled. In front, they had a high dashboard from which

were slung two quivers containing arrows or javelins. The wheels were solid discs of wood, most ingeniously contrived of two crescent-shaped sections fitted about an elliptical middle piece, the whole bound with a tyre.¹ The asses or horses (though the contrary is often stated, the early Sumerians were certainly acquainted with the *ass of the mountains*, as they called the horse ; but it was a rarity to them, the ass being their common draught-beast) were fastened to a yoke springing from the front of the vehicle, and the reins (apparently attached to nose-rings, not bits) passed through an ornamental metal holder at the end of this.² The same mosaic also shows us soldiers armed rather differently from those of Lagash, with short stabbing-spears and curious capes of either felt or leather.

Elsewhere on the Stela of the Vultures, we see one of those burial-cairns of which Eannatum makes frequent mention, in process of construction. The fallen, naked, are piled in a pyramidal heap which is being covered with basketsful of earth whilst a bullock is sacrificed. Another fragment, from which the monument is named, shows vultures bearing several heads and limbs off from the field.

Artistically, the Stela of the Vultures is not without merit. Really fine work in bas-relief was not produced by native Sumerians before about 2400 B.C., but the figures on this early monument, though crude and blockish, have dignity ; the composition, so far as it can now be judged, was balanced and rhythmical ; and the grandiose conception of the whole rouses our admiration. Technically, too, the work is definitely skilful.

It was apparently after his defeat of Umma that Eannatum turned against Ur, Uruk and their allies. If our interpretation of the King-list is the correct one, then it was he who overthrew the I Dyn. of Ur. Nur-Ninsubur says that this was done by the Dyn. of Awan whose three kings ruled for 356 years and were succeeded by the II Dyn. of Kish. Perhaps we may explain

¹ Exactly similar wheels were used in parts of Armenia as lately as the XIX cent.

² An exquisite example of such a holder, from the ' Royal Tombs ', is now in the British Museum.

this by supposing that both Kish and Awan (which was a city lying east of the Tigris) were independent during the later days of the I Dyn. of Ur and that the latter was for a time the chief city of Akkad. That Eannatum actually captured and sacked Ur is probable, for Aannipadda's splendid temple at el-'Ubeid showed clear traces of having been plundered by an enemy ; and it is possible that both he and his successor actually ruled over the city for a while.

What was probably his last campaign was the result of a raid on the part of Zuzu king of Akshak, the modern Khafâje near Eshnunna, at the junction of the Udhaim with the Tigris. Apparently, this monarch was in alliance with the rulers of Kish and Mari. The Mari usually referred to in the cuneiform texts was a city in the far north-west on the middle reaches of the Euphrates, but there is reason to think that there may also have been another place of the same name on the Tigris, and if so, this must be the one now in question. Eannatum gave battle to the allies at the Antasurra, apparently a shrine of Ningirsu lying somewhere north-west of Lagash, and after driving them before him as far as Akshak, a distance of more than 200 miles as the crow flies, pillaged that city and probably took the opportunity of his presence with a victorious army in the North to get himself acknowledged as overlord of Kish, though this may really have happened after the war with Umma. He does not seem to have attacked the city of Awan which—if the present writer's theory that the Dyn. of Awan flourished at this time be correct—was probably too tough a nut for him to crack.

Other inscriptions of Eannatum record his acts of piety toward the gods. He rebuilt the sacred quarter of Lagash, called Girsu, in honour of Ningirsu, and the neighbouring town of Nina in honour of the goddess whose name it bore, and sunk a holy well in the temple of Ningirsu.

This great ruler probably had a long reign. He was succeeded by his brother who bore the confusingly similar name of *Enannatum I*. A few inscriptions of his have been preserved, from which we learn that he adorned the temple of Ningirsu with cedar-wood. He has left no record of any military achievements. Indeed, there is no doubt that the power of

Lagash, so formidable under his brother, suffered an eclipse in his day : an eclipse due, as we shall see presently, to the rise of the *II Dyn. of Uruk* under its king *Enshagkushanna*. Taking advantage of this, the men of Umma set out to avenge the defeat inflicted on them by Eannatum. The passage in the historical summary already quoted which refers to this is somewhat obscure : but it seems as if the people of Umma required tithes of corn to be paid them (perhaps in compensation for the surrender of the strip of ground set aside by Eannatum as a 'kingless domain'). The wording is as follows :

Of the corn of *Nina*, the corn of *Ningirsu* (note how a city's property is described as the property of its gods) the people of Umma consumed one measure each as tithe. The tax was imposed. 144,000 great measures came in. Because this corn was not paid out, *Urlumma* isag of Umma let the water out of the boundary-canal of *Ningirsu*, the boundary-canal of *Nina*. He burned in fire and smashed up that boundary-stela (of *Mesilim*) ; destroyed the consecrated shrines of the gods that had been built at *Namnundakigarra* ; occupied these territories ; from thence crossed the boundary-canal of *Ningirsu*. *Enannatum*, isag of *Lagash*, raised his sword to fight with him in *Ugigga*, a field of the territory of *Ningirsu*. *Entemena*, the dear son of *Enannatum*, defeated him. *Urlumma* fled away ; flung himself into the midst of Umma. He left sixty soldiers of his army dead along the bank of the canal *Lummagirmunta*. Those men's bones he left along the plain ; heaped up their burial-cairns in five places. At that time, *Il*, being priest of *Inanna's* shrine, marched from *Girsu* to Umma like a warrior. *Il* seized the isag-ship of Umma. He let out the water from the boundary-canal of *Ningirsu*, the boundary-canal of *Nina*, the *Imdabba* of *Ningirsu*, the *Namnundakigarra* of *Enlil*, *Enki* and *Ninharsag*. He increased the corn of *Lagash* by one measure each. *Entemena* isag of *Lagash* said to *Il* : 'Thou who hast come to fortune, *Il*, isag of Umma, the stolen strip of territory, the cause of hostility, the boundary-canal of *Ningirsu*, the boundary-canal of *Nina*, is mine ! ' He told him to shift his dam from the *Antasurra* back to the temple of *Dimgalabzu*. *Enlil* and *Ninharsag* had not given the land to him. *Entemena*, isag of *Lagash*, chosen by name of *Ningirsu*, at the just word of *Enlil*, at the just word of *Ningirsu*, at the just word of *Nina*, made that canal from the *Tigris* to the *Euphrates*.

The above account is not clear in every particular, but what

THE ISAGS OF LAGASH

happened was probably as follows. Enannatum I was killed at the battle of Ugigga, and his son Entemena (who is the author of this long and interesting inscription) was left to carry on the war. He defeated Urlumma and then a priestly adventurer from Lagash, taking advantage of the general confusion, made a dash to Umma and seized the throne there. At first, he tried to carry on Urlumma's policy, but relapsed on being threatened by Entemena. He may have been a native of Umma who was dwelling in Lagash for some reason, rather than a subject of Entemena.

Of Urlumma himself we possess a memorial in the shape of a lapis-lazuli tablet with the inscription : *For Enlil, Urlumma king of Umma, son of Enakalli king of Umma, has built a temple.* Entemena's own inscriptions are numerous. His best-known memorial is a superb engraved silver vase now in the Louvre. It is noteworthy that in all of them he calls himself merely *isag* and never king. Obviously, Lagash was no such imperial capital as it had been in his uncle's day ; and the clue to this state of affairs is provided by one of his own inscriptions. A few years ago, native dealers in el-'Irâq got possession of a number of the large carrot-shaped cones of baked clay, with cuneiform inscriptions, of the sort which the Sumerians often let into the mud walls of the buildings. The text of one acquired by the British Museum was published by Mr. C. J. Gadd. Another was acquired by the present writer, and there are others now in Europe. The inscription records the dedication and endowment of a temple to certain gods and adds : *At that time, Entemena isag of Lagash made alliance with Lugalkineshdudu isag of Uruk.* Now this Lugalkineshdudu is known from an inscription found at Ur and now in the new Babylonian Room of the British Museum to be one and the same person as the *Lugalkigubnidudu* of whom important monuments were found by the Americans at Nippur. In these, the king (for so he calls himself) says : *When Enlil had uttered to him a sure command ; had combined a lordship with a kingship ; in Uruk he wielded a lordship, in Ur he wielded a kingship.* Here is proof that a South Sumerian ruler had to control both Ur and Uruk before he could be officially recognized as king. In another inscription, he is mentioned alongside *Lugalkisalsi* who is also called *king of Uruk*,

king of Ur and who apparently was at first his co-regent and then his successor.

The inscription in the British Museum (which the writer was recently able to examine, thanks to the courtesy of Mr. C. J. Gadd) is very difficult to read, owing to the poor quality of the carving, but it is to be interpreted as follows: *To the god Nannar, Anuzu the Merchant has dedicated this vase for (the life) of Lugalkineshdudu, king of Kish, and the life of the prince, even the life of Lugalkisalsi.*¹ We owe a debt of gratitude to Anuzu the Merchant, for it is from his dedication that we learn that Lugalkineshdudu and Lugalkigubnidudu are simply two ways of writing the same name, and that the *isag* of Uruk (as he has the impertinence to call him) with whom Entemena of Lagash curried favour was really the mighty king who ruled not only Ur but even Kish.

Now so important a king of Uruk must surely, one thinks, have found a place in Nur-Ninsubur's King-list. As it stands, he does not. The list states that the II Dyn. of Kish was followed by the Dyn. of Hamazi (a place somewhere east of the Tigris) which consisted of one king—Hadanish, a foreign name—ruling for 360 unlikely years, after which we have the II Dyn. of Uruk, founded by Enugduanna. Another list originally gave two more names after his, but they are now lost. That the missing names were those of Lugalkigubnidudu and Lugalkisalsi is almost certain. As to Enugduanna, many scholars are of opinion that his name is a variant or misspelling of *Enshagkushanna*, of whom an inscribed vase found at Nippur states that he conquered Akshak and overcame Enbi-Ashdar king of Kish.

Provisionally, then, we may say that the II Dyn. of Uruk flourished (according to the chronological scheme used here) from about 2800 to 2660 B.C. and consisted of Enshagkushanna, who conquered Kish, probably just after the death of Eannatum of Lagash, Lugalkigubnidudu, who added Ur to his domains, and Lugalkisalsi who became overlord of Lagash. Our authority for this last statement is the record, of later times,²

¹ This inscription has never previously been translated. A facsimile of it appears in *Ur Royal Inscriptions*, No. 3.

² See Ch. V.

that a stela of Lugalkisalsi stood in E-ninnu at Lagash—a sure sign of political authority on the part of the king who set it there. Lagash had fallen from its high estate. The four *isags* following Entemena—Enannatum II, Enetarzi, Enlitarzi (who had been high-priest of Ningirsu under Entemena) and Lugalanda—boast no foreign conquests and have left little to remember them by. In the days of Enetarzi—so a most interesting despatch written to the *isag* by Luenna, priest of Ninmar, and preserved in the Louvre, informs us—a marauding band of Elamites actually raided the city and carried off booty, though the writer of the despatch was finally able to beat them off with great slaughter.

The II Dyn. of Uruk was followed, according to a fragmentary chronicle, by the II Dyn. of Ur, consisting of four kings, all of whose names are lost and who ruled apparently for 108 years. Excavations at Ur have failed to reveal the slightest trace of these monarchs, though the latest and poorest series of tombs in the 'Royal Cemetery' are theoretically dated by the excavators to their time. These tombs consisted of deep shafts which had been filled in by degrees, and religious rites performed at various levels in them. Altars and hearths were built for these rites. The burials were mostly in coffins of reeds or wood, accompanied by gold ornaments, jewellery, copper weapons, pots, etc., in far less profusion than was the case with the older graves. Whether some of the bodies represent human sacrifices, we cannot say. In all probability they do not. Sometimes model boats of hardened asphalt lay near the coffins, probably to enable the departed spirits to cross the 'Waters of Death'.

The II Dyn. of Ur was followed, according to Nur-Ninsubur, by the dynasties of Adab and Mari, the III Dyn. of Kish, the Dyn. of Akshak and the IV Dyn. of Kish. These dynasties no doubt overlapped one another considerably and were, further, contemporary with the II Dyn. of Uruk and the II Dyn. of Ur. The III Dyn. of Kish consisted of a single ruler—the woman *Ku-Bau*, a wine-seller, who established the foundations of Kish. After her came the Dyn. of Akshak with 6 kings reigning for 96 years, and then, at Kish *Puzur-Sin*, son of *Ku-Bau*, was king. He ruled 25 years. Another chronicle makes better sense of this,

combining the III and IV dynasties of Kish into one—headed by Ku-Bau—and placing this after the Dyn. of Akshak. The two must really have overlapped.

The rise to fame and royalty of the humble and not very respectable Ku-Bau is—if historical—a most extraordinary thing. The profession of alewife or wine-seller was a distinctly shady one in ancient Babylonia. Indeed, a tavern was regarded as such a *mauvais lieu* that, in later times, a priestess who disgraced herself by even entering one was liable to be burned alive. Ku-Bau is, moreover, the only queen in her own right in all Nur-Ninsubur's list of rulers. Still more remarkable to the modern historian than her dramatic rise from the bar to throne, however, is the fact that she called her son and successor *Puzur-Sin*, for that name is not Sumerian, as her own was, but *Semitic*: and this brings us face to face with the next great movement of people which was to affect the course of history in the middle East.

4. *The Semites*

Probably no two technical terms have been so consistently and hopelessly misused as the words *Semite* and *Āryan*. We shall deal with the latter catchword in Chapter IV. The word *Semite*, correctly employed, means primarily a person speaking one of a great group of very closely related languages called by philologists the *Semitic languages*, and it may fairly be extended to mean a person who, in addition to speaking such a language, entertains certain fundamental religious principles which seem to appear wherever one of these languages is used. This is the only sense in which the term ought ever to be employed. An older generation of historians, it is true, believed that all the races speaking all the dialects which go to make up the Semitic group had had a common origin in remote times, in Arabia, and that they had spread out thence, at long intervals, in a series of great migratory waves over the whole near and middle East. In other words, they considered that there was, in addition to a specific *Semitic group of languages*, a specific *Semitic racial type*. This theory is now universally

THE SEMITES

abandoned. In the first place, the researches of Mr. Bertram Thomas, explorer of the Rub'-el-Khâli, have shown that the earliest inhabitants of Arabia did not speak a Semitic tongue at all. Further, it is recognized that that country has never been sufficiently populous to be the source of a long series of emigrations. Finally, as far back as our knowledge carries us, we find Semitic languages being spoken by at least two distinct racial types—the stocky, broad-headed ‘ Armenoid ’ and the slender, long-headed ‘ Mediterranean ’—whilst at the present day, such languages are spoken by races as physically different as the coal-black Senussi of Northern Africa and the pale-faced (and often fair-haired) Syrians of the Lebanon region. It must be understood, then, that *there is not and never was a distinct ‘ Semitic race ’*.

The Semitic family of languages, on the other hand, is perhaps the most distinctive and homogeneous of linguistic groups. It is divided by the modern philologist into two main branches, ‘ East Semitic ’ (the older branch, comprising the three very closely related dialects, Akkadian, Assyrian and Babylonian) and ‘ West Semitic ’, subdivided into ‘ N.W. Semitic ’ (Hebrew, Aramaïc, Phœnician, Syriac, *etc.*) and ‘ S.W. Semitic ’ (the various dialects of Arabic, Maltese, Ethiopic and the modern Abyssinian dialects). All these languages are very closely related—far more closely than the various Indogermanic languages of Europe—both in grammar and vocabulary. As an illustration of this, we may take at random the following words in E. Semitic (Assyrian), N.W. Semitic (Hebrew) and S.W. Semitic (‘ Irâqi Arabic).

| <i>Word</i> | <i>Assyrian</i> | <i>Hebrew</i> | <i>Arabic</i> |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| God | <i>Ilu</i> | <i>El</i> | <i>Allah</i> |
| water | <i>me</i> | <i>mayim</i> | <i>mai</i> |
| dog | <i>kalbu</i> | <i>keleb</i> | <i>cheleb</i> |
| hand | <i>idu</i> | <i>yadh</i> | <i>id</i> |

The grammatical peculiarities of these languages need not detain us here, though they are a fascinating subject of study. Semitic grammar and syntax are, in some respects, extraordinarily loose and slipshod (the verb has only two tenses, there is no true relative pronoun, and the same word is often used with

a bewildering variety of meanings), but on the other hand, they are probably better adapted for the vivid and vigorous description of concrete objects and events than those of any other tongues. Poor in abstracts, the Semitic vocabulary abounds in synonyms and fine shades of meaning for deeds and things ; is the vocabulary of the poet rather than the philosopher. At their best, indeed, as in Hebrew and Classical Arabic, the Semitic languages have a descriptive force only equalled (and hardly excelled) by Elizabethan English and Homeric Greek. Intensely and subtly rhythmical, they lend themselves to set recitation and impromptu oratory. The simplest narrative, told by an uneducated Arab, falls naturally into a kind of blank verse. Their great literary merit is the use of vivid and ingenious simile, their great defect a tendency to monotony and over-elaboration of detail.

Though we must never speak of a Semitic race, it does seem permissible to talk (at any rate when we confine ourselves to the middle East) of a Semitic mentality. The men who speak the Semitic dialects, in fact, do appear to have ideas and characteristics in common, as well as words. The Semitic mind is lively, practical, strongly materialistic, more influenced by passion than logic. Much given to moralizing—and having exercised, in his day, an incalculable influence upon the moral and religious development of the human race—the Semite prefers to approach the abstract through the emotions rather than through the reason, and his attempts at formal metaphysics invariably degenerate into hair-splitting on the one hand or mysticism on the other. Underlying and complementary to his shrewd worldly wisdom he has in his nature a deep streak of fatalism. His idea of death and the hereafter was, until the Revelation of the Prophet Muhammad, profoundly a gloomy one. The pessimistic colouring which we noted in the Epic of Gilgamesh is pretty certainly due to its Semitic editors and translators. Intensely religious, and capable of the most devilish fanaticism, the Semite has always been haunted by an overmastering conviction of the closeness and ubiquity of his god. He sees him everywhere. Jacob takes a stone for a pillow and finds the Lord was in it. The Arab who has suffered a loss concludes the matter with : ‘ It

THE SEMITES

is the hand of God', meaning by that no more than that it is *circumstance*, what is in every time and in every place. Fundamentally, though he might worship a hundred gods, the pagan Semite was a monotheist or pantheist, seeing in all his divinities only manifestations of the One God, universal and omnipotent, whose attributes are finally crystallized in the Muslim formula, *la illāha ill'Allah, w'Allah huw'akbar*, 'There is no god save God, and God is most great'. Compared with this eternal and omnipotent Being, superior to time and destiny, yet so near to man that a covenant can be made between Him and His chosen, the gods of the Sumerians were limited and petty creatures indeed.

Where the mingling of Armenoid and Mediterranean races, from which this peculiar set of languages and ideas arose, took place, we cannot say. The fertile hills and plains of Syria appear the most likely breeding-ground. At any rate it was from that quarter that men of Semitic speech first penetrated into el-'Irâq. In the chronicle of Nur-Ninsubur, as early as the semi-mythical I Dyn. of Kish, we find that some of the kings have definitely Semitic names. A few old Sumerian words (notably those for 'peace' and 'war' and one of the copulative particles) appear to have been borrowed from a Semitic language. Nor will the tradition have been forgotten that in the reign of Enmerkar of the I Dyn. of Uruk that city was besieged by men from the west—*i.e.* from Syria. Probably, then, we are safe in saying that a Semitic-speaking race were beginning to filter through from Syria to el-'Irâq very soon after 3000 B.C.

Their earliest settlements, it seems, were made in the narrow plain of northern Babylonia, between Baghdād and Babylon, and east of the Tigris in the region of Eshnunna, the district called in Sumerian *Uri* and in Semitic *Warum*. On the whole, their penetration must have been a peaceful one, and they will have settled companionably enough among the older and more civilized population. The theory sometimes put forward that Sumerians and Semites were deadly enemies is quite unsound.

The Semitic-speaking newcomers, though usually retaining their own names and language, readily adopted all the chief

customs of the Sumerians. We can form some notion of the state of their culture when they first settled in el-'Irâq from the number of words they borrowed from the Sumerian language and incorporated in their own. Their commonest words for 'reign', 'throne', 'governor (*isag*)', 'priest', 'temple', 'shrine', 'inscription', 'writing-tablet', 'stylus', 'scribe', 'doctor', 'soothsayer', and many more were of Sumerian origin: but they retained (for example) their own words for 'house', 'bricks', 'chariot', 'garment', 'gold', 'silver', 'god', 'king' and 'lord'. Obviously they had already passed beyond the stage of barbarism before settling in el-'Irâq. To what extent their culture had developed out of that of the Painted Pottery Age in Syria, we cannot say. If Sumerian stories of warlike expeditions made by ancient kings like Gilgamesh and Meskemgasher to the West are founded on fact—as probably they are—then the early Semites must have been in contact with the civilization of Babylonia from the beginning.

The adaptability of the Semitic mind to the conditions of any higher civilization with which it comes in contact is well illustrated by the attitude of the newcomers toward the Sumerian gods. What their own divinities were, it is not easy for us to say. Certainly, like all other peoples of the ancient East, they worshipped the great Mother Goddess, whom they called *Ishtar* (Ashtoreth, Astarte) and with whom they identified the numerous goddesses of the Sumerians. The sun, under the name of *Shamash* (whence Hebrew *Samson*), was another object of their devotion. For the rest, they eagerly adopted the Sumerian divinities. An, Enlil and Enki were brought into their pantheon as *Anum*, *Illil* (also *Bel*, 'the Lord', Hebrew *Baal*) and *Ea*. Zuen, the moongod, had his name semitized to *Sin*. The names of other Sumerian deities passed into the new language unchanged, as that of Ilbaba, the wargod of Kish, for whom the newcomers—settling, as they did, chiefly in the region of this city—had an especial reverence.

The emergence into history of the Semitic-speaking races is the most important event which has ever befallen in the middle East; is, indeed, one of the crucial events in the whole story of the human race. To-day, a Semitic language is

LUGALZAGGISI

spoken from north-western Africa to the Persian Gulf and from Abyssinia to the frontiers of Armenia. Of the four great world-religions, three—Islam, Israel and Christianity—are the creations of the Semitic mind. Considered impartially, the influence exercised by the Semitic-speaking peoples as a whole on human history has been greater than that of the Romans or the Greeks. The final victory of the Semitic group of languages over all rivals in the middle East ¹ implied, not the establishment of a single unmixed ruling race but the imposition of a mental outlook, a way of thinking, the effect of which has been incalculable, even upon our own civilization, even to-day. Within the scope of this text-book, we are able to watch the first beginnings of an enormous revolution of thought and culture, and to trace the influence upon its growth of the older systems that it was eventually to supersede.

5. *Lugalzaggisi*

Before we record the establishment in el-'Irâq of one supreme dynasty of Semitic-speaking kings, there are still some events of native Sumerian history to be described. Probably about the time that the II Dyn. of Ur was drawing to its close in southern Sumer, and Puzur-Sin, son of Ku-Bau, was on the throne of Kish—say then, in round numbers, about 2590 B.C. or a few years later—Lugalanda, *isag* of Lagash, was succeeded by a new ruler, apparently not of the blood royal, who took the title of *king of Girsu* (the sacred quarter of the city of Lagash) and whose name, recorded in a great number of inscriptions now in the Louvre, was *Urukagina*. It would seem that one of the kings of the II Dyn. of Ur had actually sacked Lagash, for certain monuments from that city were found at Ur, and the wanton damage which had been done them proves that they had been carried off as spoil. At any rate, the city was in a state of decline at the accession of Urukagina and, as a

¹ This is not to mean that other languages were not and are not spoken in these lands ; but save for Persian (and Turkish, which falls outside our area both in time and space) they were of small importance.

result, its public life had become corrupt, abuses flourished and the poor were oppressed. In a series of most interesting and important inscriptions, the new king tells us of the reforms which he instituted after he had gained the throne. The late Prof. L. W. King has pointed out ¹ that it was only after he had reigned for about a year that Urukagina exchanged the title of *isag* for that of 'king', and that this change probably coincided with the publication of his edicts of reform. It is very likely that he was set up (perhaps after a civil war) by a 'popular party' who were weary of the corrupt rule of the ancient and once magnificent house of Ur-Nina.

The reforms which the new king instituted were chiefly connected with that everlasting evil of eastern government, the taking of 'rake-offs' and perquisites by government officials. The priests especially were offenders in this respect. The soothsayer who read the future from the shape of drops of oil poured into water demanded a shekel of silver for his services (although he was adequately maintained from the temple revenues) whilst, more outrageous still, the chief minister and the *isag* expected fees of one and five shekels respectively on each occasion! They levied a similar tax on divorces. Cattle and irrigation-wells belonging to the commoners were frequently seized without compensation, and the catches stolen out of their fishgarths. Freeman were forced to do boon-work on the royal estates and, says Urukagina, by a refinement of meanness and tyranny the ruler *did not give them drinking-water. An ass for drinking water was not given them.* In el-'Irâq to-day, when men are employed on an excavation, the first care of the white director is to hire one or more pack-donkeys to come and go between the 'dig' and the river or canal with supplies of drinking-water. The priests exacted tithes on the crops, cut trees and stole fruit as they liked. On the other hand, the lay officials attached to the palace plundered the temple-revenues, and it seems that the *isag* himself was not ashamed to dip his fingers into them.

All those scandals were abolished by Urukagina who, as an earnest of his disinterested wish for reform, restored to the gods the estates and cattle which had been misappropriated by his

¹ *History of Sumer and Akkad*, Ch. VI.

predecessors. His reforms, however, were more far-reaching than this. If we understand his words aright, there had existed in Sumer from the earliest times a class of serfs, attached to the soil, which he abolished, raising its members to the condition of free men. *At that time, from of old, from the beginning, the boatman had dwelt on the boat, the herdsman had dwelt with the ass, the herdsman had dwelt with the sheep . . . He freed the boatman from the boat ; freed the herdsman from the ass and from the sheep.* It is not perfectly certain, however, whether this refers to the emancipation of an oppressed class or to the abolition of certain orders of officials.¹ Finally, we may quote the following curious enactment :

A dead man carried to the grave took 7 jars as his drink, 420 loaves, 120 qa of grain as his food, one garment, one kid, one bed, one chair (?) . The libation-priest took 60 qa of grain . . . Nowadays, a dead man carried to the grave takes 3 jars as his drink, 80 loaves as his food, one bed, one kid, one chair (?) . The libation-priest takes 30 qa of grain. Here, Urukagina was restraining what must have been the insane lavishness of the old funeral customs, well illustrated by the graves at Ur, limiting the amount of food and property which might be buried with the dead and also reducing the fee payable to the priest who, no doubt, performed the ceremonies in the grave-shaft. A larger allowance was made in the case of bodies interred in the *Precinct of Enki*, which was doubtless a sacred cemetery like that of Ur, where only persons of importance could find rest. The reaction against the wastage of the burial-rites seems to have been general in Sumer at this time, and may be due to the influence of Semitic ideas. At any rate, the graves at Ur which date from just after the period of Urukagina are far less rich than those of earlier times.

The glimpses of Sumerian life which Urukagina's decrees give us are fascinating in the extreme. We see a highly-organized society, mainly pastoral and agricultural it is true, but obviously with great mercantile interests, governed by a complex and—under a weak or unscrupulous ruler—extremely tyrannical bureaucracy. We see a fully-developed class system which appears based on employment rather than on

¹ This is Prof. King's opinion.

birth. We find traces of a distinction between proprietary and common land, a very definite appreciation of the mutual obligations of ruler and subject, a clear-cut and eminently reasonable ideal of proper social conditions and of the equality, or relative equality, of individuals before the law. In a word, we see a *social system* having many more resemblances to, than differences from, the social systems of to-day: and this is not new. With the exception of the reformed burial-usages and (perhaps) the emancipation of serfs, Urukagina was making no innovations, but was simply restoring a public equilibrium which had been upset by military reverses and by the inefficiency, or worse, of previous rulers. Judged by its material remains, Sumerian civilization at the beginning of the XXVI cent. B.C. was only slightly different from what it was in the XXX; and there is no reason to doubt that in the remote days of Lugalshagengur and Enhegal the civil life of Lagash was as highly-organized as in those of Urukagina.

Urukagina is decidedly a sympathetic figure. His reforms show him in the light of a true father of his people, a man noble enough to see and hate a wrong, intelligent enough to devise the means of righting it, and strong enough to enforce the means he had devised. Evidently a man of religious mind, he attributed his reforms to the inspiration of the god Ningirsu whose frontier-shrine, Antasurra, he rebuilt. He restored numerous other temples, including E-adda, the temple of Enlil, which dates back at least as far as the days of Entemena. His other undertakings were in keeping with the character we have given him. He dug several canals, built a wall round Girsu and erected a great fort. He deserved, as much as any king in Sumer ever did, a long, prosperous and peaceful reign: but history seldom accords kings, good or bad, their fair deserts. From a broken and difficult clause in one of his inscriptions, it seems as though the old trouble over the boundary-rights between Lagash and Umma had cropped up again. At first Urukagina was apparently able to cope with it to his satisfaction. But—after he had reigned probably no more than six years—it was raised again, disastrously, by a ruler of Umma who is among the most important figures in Sumerian history—*Lugalzaggisi, son of Ukush.*

LUGALZAGGISI

How this man obtained the throne of Umma, by what means he brought about the defeat and ruination of Lagash, what fate—whether death in the field or by the executioner's bludgeon, captivity or exile—overtook the noble Urukagina, we do not know. The only witness to a great tragedy, which is also the opening act of a great drama, that we possess is a long and angry lament, written by some scribe of Lagash upon the destruction and spoliation of his city and its temples by Lugalzaggisi.

They have set fire to the Antasurra ; have carried away its silver and lapis-lazuli.

They have shed blood in the temple of Tirash ; have shed blood in the Abzubanda.

In the shrine of Enlil, the shrine of Babbar, they have shed blood ; Have shed blood in the Ahush ; have carried away its silver and lapis-lazuli . . .

The men of Umma, in that they have overturned Lagash, Have committed a sin against Ningirsu.

The power that has passed to them shall depart from them !

Sin of Urukagina, king of Girsu, there was none :

But Lugalzaggisi, isag of Umma : may his goddess Nidaba bear this sin upon her neck ! ¹

Of this Lugalzaggisi, whom the unknown poet of Lagash so bitterly upbraids, three inscriptions have survived. The earliest, probably, is a broken tablet of very fine lapis-lazuli that the writer saw some years ago in the hands of a dealer in antiquities, Meymarian Effendi of New St., Baghdâd, who courteously provided him with a facsimile of it. The text (which has not previously been translated) gives Lugalzaggisi's titles as follows, the breaks being completed from another inscription : *Lugalzag (gisi) king of Uruk, king (of) Ur, king (of the land ?), priest (of) An, son (of) Ukush*, and goes on to detail a catalogue of offerings (now too mutilated to read) which he made to the very goddess Nidaba whom the threnodist of Lagash condemned to bear his sin upon her neck. By what violent means he rose from the *isag*-ship of Umma to the historic throne of Uruk and Ur, we cannot tell. In Nur-Ninsubur's

¹ Notice once more the absolute identification of a city with its patron deity.

chronicle his reign of 25 years constitutes the III Dyn. of Uruk, and he is stated to have overthrown the Semite, Nanniyah, last king of the IV Dyn. of Kish. This is demonstrably nonsense. It is a practical certainty that he was really contemporary with Ur-Ilbaba, third king of that dynasty and grandson of the disreputable adventuress, Ku-Bau. That, having first made himself master of Uruk, he next attacked Ur and overthrew the II Dyn. there, must be assumed, provided that the present writer's interpretation of the King-list is the correct one.

So far, he had done nothing remarkable. For his further achievements we must refer to a very long triumphal inscription which was ingeniously pieced together by the late Prof. Hilprecht from fragments of a great number of inscribed stalactite vases dug up by the Americans at Nippur. In this, after recapitulating his titles, the king says : *When Enlil king of the countries had granted to Lugalzaggisi the kingship of the Land ; had turned the eyes of the Land toward him ; had prostrated the countries at his feet : then did he make straight his path for him, from the Lower Sea, by Tigris and Euphrates, to the Upper Sea. From East to West Enlil nowhere allowed him a rival. Lugalzaggisi gave the countries to rest in peace ; watered the Land with water of joy . . . Then made he Uruk to shine in sheen of countenance ; skyward, like a bull's, upraised the head of Ur ; Larsam, dear city of the sungod, watered with waters of joy ; nobly exalted Umma, dear city of Shara . . . May Enlil king of the countries prefer my prayer before his dear father An. May he add life to my life ; cause the country to rest at peace with me. Folk as numerous as scented herbs may he bestow on me with open hand ; guide for me the Flock of An (i.e. : mankind) ; look benevolently for me upon the Land. Let the gods not change the good destiny that they have assigned to me. Shepherd, leader let me be for ever !*

There are two points for us to consider in the above. The first is the scope of the dominion claimed by Lugalzaggisi. Uruk, Nippur, Larsam and Ur between them represent the whole of Sumer proper. Akkad, the narrow northern plain, was nominally under the control of Kish ; but Ur-Ilbaba of Kish (or, if he were already dead, his successor Zimudar) was too troubled by a revolt of one of his chief noblemen, as we

shall see presently, to offer any serious resistance to the upstart. Indeed, it is probable that Akkad was in some sort reduced to vassalage by Lugalzaggisi, for his claim to have marched ' by Tigris and Euphrates to the Upper Sea ' implies nothing less than a victorious campaign from Sumer northwestward, first into Mesopotamia and thence across the Euphrates and through Syria to the shores of the Mediterranean. He was thus a more distinguished conqueror even than Eannatum of Lagash. This is, indeed, the first contemporary record which we possess of a Babylonian army reaching the coast of Syria. The semi-legendary Meskemgasher of the I Dyn. of Uruk, it will be remembered, *reached the sea and went up to the mountain*, but since his day—perhaps 500 years before—there is no record that any Sumerian captain had ventured west of the upper Euphrates.

In Syria, it is probable that Lugalzaggisi's Sumerians would come into contact with the outlying traces of a culture higher than their own. For some 400 years at least, the Egyptians had been in the habit of sending naval and military expeditions, for purposes both of war and commerce, to Palestine and the Phoenician coast, and had even founded a colony at Byblos (mod. Jubêl) just north of Beyrût. If the chronology employed in this textbook be roughly accurate, Lugalzaggisi was about contemporary with the remarkable Pharaoh Pepi II of the VI Dyn. of Egypt, famous for his almost incredible reign of 94 years—the longest reign in history. A courtier of this monarch, one Pepinakht, has left in his tomb a record of how he was sent into Asia by the Pharaoh to recover the body of a certain caravan-commander, 'En'onkhet, who had been killed by the 'Dwellers on the Sand' (*i.e.* Badûw) whilst he was building a ship there. This shows how constant was the communication between Egypt and western Asia at this early date. That Lugalzaggisi, in his venturous expedition, actually encountered Egyptians is not probable, but he would certainly meet natives who had been in contact with them.

The second notable peculiarity of the inscription is the very definite overtone of fear which one perceives in it. The prayers for peace and continued rule suggest that Lugalzaggisi was conscious of some threat to his crown. He was the first

imperialist in Babylonian history, the first ruler to dream of a lordship that should embrace not only all the jarring city-states of Sumer, but even foreign lands. Yet he is ill at ease. There is a rival in the field.

As we have seen, a Semitic dynasty was already established on the throne of Kish. Indeed, so important an element in the population of el-'Irâq had people of Semitic speech become that Lugalzaggisi actually thought well to set up a statue of himself with an inscription in the new language. This document, of which we possess a late copy, is probably the oldest written example of a Semitic tongue, and so, in a sense, may be regarded as the primitive ancestor of all that incomparable treasure of Babylonian, Hebrew, Aramaïc, Syriac and Arabic literature which the next 4000 years were to bring forth. It runs : *Lugalzaggisi, lord of the land of Uruk, king of the land of Ur : whoso destroys this inscription, may Illil and Shamash rend his loins and may they take away his seed. Whosoever hides this statue, may Illil blot out his name ; may he shatter his weapon ! Before Illil I have set it up.* The opening clause recalls Lugalkigubnidudu's claim to have made a lordship of Uruk and a kingship of Ur, and shows how essential it was for a South Sumerian prince to control both these cities if he wished to use the title 'king'.

6. *The Empire of Agade*

It has already been stated that the Semitic kings of Kish were prevented by a rebellion within their own dominions from resisting the aggression of Lugalzaggisi. The rebel was one of their own race who, under the name of Sharrukîn or *Sargon*, was destined to become the most famous figure in early Babylonian history, the centre of innumerable traditions and stories, the Charlemagne or Barbarossa of el-'Irâq. For the history of this great conqueror and administrator we depend as much upon later chronicles and traditions as upon his own monuments. It is one of the former (preserved on a tablet now in the British Museum) which tells us, in words placed in the king's own mouth, of his humble birth and boyhood. *My mother was humble. I knew not my father. My father's brother was*

THE EMPIRE OF AGADE

a dweller in the mountain (i.e. the Syrian hills) My town was Azupirani that is set on the bank of Euphrates. My humble mother conceived me; secretly brought me to birth; set me in an ark of bulrushes; made fast my door with pitch. She consigned me to the river, which did not overwhelm me. The river carried me along to Akki the irrigator . . . Akki the irrigator brought me up to be his son; . . . set me to gardening. During my gardening, lo! the goddess Ishtar was amorous of me, and for (fifty)-four years indeed I swayed the kingship.

Nur-Ninsubur says: *At Agade, Sharrukîn-Ilu-bâni¹ the gardener, cup-bearer of Ur-Ilbaba, the king of Agade who built Agade, was king. He ruled fifty-six years.* Nevertheless, he places five kings of Kish and the whole twenty-five years' reign of Lugalzaggisi between Ur-Ilbaba and Sargon—an absurdity which clearly demonstrates the arbitrary and artificial order of the dynasties in the King-lists.

The insistence of both accounts on Sargon's humble origin is very interesting when compared with the equally lowly status of Ku-Bau, foundress of the Semitic III Dyn. of Kish. Both stories preserve the tradition of a time when the early Semitic settlers in el-'Irâq occupied menial positions in the Sumerian community. The story of the ark of bulrushes evidently took a hold on the popular imagination, for in later centuries it was transmitted from Babylonia to both the Hebrews (who used it in the story of Moses) and the Romans (Romulus and Remus). Probably Sargon really was a humble lad who caught the attention of Ur-Ilbaba and rose (as such favourites have often risen in the East) to a position of trust. Perhaps it was after his patron's death that he rebelled, founding for himself the city of *Agade*, whose Semitic name ('The Two Vessels') may indicate his ambition to rule the valleys of Tigris and Euphrates. The exact location of Agade is still unknown, but from it the whole narrow northern plain of Babylonia took the name of *Akkad*, whilst the Semitic-speaking settlers in el-'Irâq became known as 'Men of Akkad', *Akkadians*.

How long it was before Sargon actually subverted the III

¹ This seems to be the full and original form of the name of Sargon. It is Semitic and means 'God creates a true king'.

Dyn. of Kish and made that city tributary to his new capital of Agade, we do not know ; but it is certain that he did so. This move brought him face-to-face with Lugalzaggisi, the only powerful king in Babylonia in his day ; and the ambitious Semite evidently decided that the country was too small for both of them. According to another late tradition, Sargon finally chose a typically oriental means of precipitating a quarrel between himself and the Sumerian prince. He obtained possession of Lugalzaggisi's wife and forced her to enter his *harim*, afterwards sending a message to her husband to acquaint him of the fact. The unfortunate Lugalzaggisi was dumbfounded and sat sobbing in the dust. Honour demanded that he should avenge the insult, however, and he finally took the field against Sargon, whose own inscriptions tell us that—*He overthrew Uruk in battle, and fifty isags with the weapon of Illbaba he defeated, along with the city. He threw down its walls, and defeated Lugalzaggisi, king of Uruk, in the field ; cast him into fetters ; led him captive to the Gate of Illil.* So fell Lugalzaggisi, the great conqueror, and so was fulfilled the curse of the unknown poet of Lagash who foretold that the glory which had come to the men of Umma should pass away.

The overthrow of Uruk left the way clear for a thorough-going conquest of Southern Babylonia, and this Sargon immediately undertook. Ur resisted, and was plundered and its walls destroyed. Lagash seems to have been subdued without great difficulty, and Sargon solemnly *washed his weapons in the sea*, an Akkadian custom which marked the termination, on the shore or river-bank, of a successful campaign. Umma, however, rose in arms to avenge the ruin of her great son, and was punished as Ur had been. All Babylonia was now in undisputed vassalage to the Akkadian prince who had begun life as a gardener's boy.¹

Sargon now set himself to imitate the imperialist policy of Lugalzaggisi. The first object of his attention was the powerful land of Elam and its near neighbour, Barahsi. His inscriptions (which are known to us only from late copies) are

¹ To the Oriental there is nothing particularly extraordinary in this. One of the ablest monarchs in the middle East to-day began life in an equally humble status.

not absolutely clear on this point, but it appears that the districts of South-western Persia called Urua (which had been conquered by Eannatum), Saliamu, Karnene, Ganni, Bunban, Gunilaha, Saba, all Barahsi, the city of Susa and Awan or Awak, a city of el-'Irâq, lying east of the Tigris, were conquered and spoiled, and 'the *isag* of Elam', the son of the king of Elam, two governors of Barahsi, the brother of the king of Barahsi, the magistrate of Barahsi and other important rulers and nobles taken prisoner. The name of the king of Elam is given as Hisibrasini, and apparently he sent an ambassador with a tribute of cedar-wood to Sargon, probably as a ransom for his son. Sargon boasts that he had made Elam and Barahsi the upper boundary of his empire.

His next act seems to have been of a generous and conciliatory nature. He renewed the city of Kish, which appears to have been destroyed either by himself or (more probably) in some unrecorded campaign of Lugalzaggisi. His treatment of Ur was even more striking. Here has been found part of a sadly damaged alabaster disk, bearing sculptures and an inscription in which it is still possible to decipher the name of *Enheduanna*, *high-priestess of the god Nannar, wife of Nannar, daughter of Sargon*. The sculpture, which is of competent if not brilliant workmanship, shows a woman in a curious flounced robe and with braided hair falling from beneath a tall mitre, standing among her attendants. The disk is now in the University Museum of Pennsylvania. Evidently, for reasons of policy, Sargon had installed his own daughter as chief priestess of the powerful moongod of Ur—a position which was regarded as making her the earthly bride of the god. Seals belonging to *Enheduanna* and her steward *Adda* have also been found at Ur. A broken inscription now in America gives the name of one of Sargon's wives as *Ashnartum*.

Babylonia and the lands east thereof being subjugated, Sargon was at liberty to follow the footprints of Lugalzaggisi to the Mediterranean. Later traditions credit him with three distinct campaigns against Syria. The statement of his own monuments is that *he did worship in Tutuli unto the god Dagan, who gave him the Upper Country, even Mari, Yarmuti, Ibla, the Cedar Forest and the Mountain of Silver*. The locality of Tutuli is

unknown, but Dagan (Biblical Dagon) was the chief god of the Semitic-speaking people of northern Syria, and the regions which he 'gave' to Sargon all lie on, or west of, the Euphrates. Nari was only just north of Akkad. Yarmuti is known to have been a coastal district of Syria, probably very near to the modern Beyrût. Ibla lay north of it, probably in the extreme north of Syria. The famous Cedar-Forest, guarded of old by the ogre Huwawa, was the Amanus Mts., which lie just at the angle made by the Syrian coast with that of Asia Minor, whilst the Mountain of Silver is in Cilicia, a district of eastern Asia Minor. This is a sufficiently impressive tale of conquests, but the later chroniclers, not content with it, have even attributed to Sargon the seizure of Kaptara (Caphtor, Krete) by a naval expedition! This is certainly an exaggeration. So far as his campaign into Asia Minor is concerned, a later tradition apparently tells us that he was asked by certain merchants of a city called Burushhanda there to free them from the tyranny of the local king, and that, although his own captains sought to dissuade him from so dangerous a venture, he succeeded in doing so.

Burushhanda or Burushhatim is known to have lain somewhere considerably north of Cilicia—600 or 700 miles as the crow flies north-west of Akkad—and it is a most interesting fact that, about 350 years after Sargon's time, there certainly were merchants dwelling at *Ganesh* (mod. Kül-Tepe), just west of the Anti-Taurus Mts. in Asia Minor, who spoke a Semitic dialect very like Akkadian but liker still to its first-cousin Assyrian, wrote in cuneiform characters and were in close communication with Babylonia and Assyria on the one hand and with Burushhatim on the other. Exactly how these people were connected with the Semitic-speaking settlers in el-'Irâq it is not easy to decide: but that they were connected is evident, and it is quite possible that their colony had been founded as early as the XXVI cent. B.C. and that it was their ancestors who appealed for help to Sargon.

Sargon was now by far the most powerful monarch who had ever ruled in el-'Irâq. In the inscription just quoted, he boasts: *Sargon, king of Kish, has won thirty-four battles; has destroyed the walls even as far as the shore of the sea. He caused the*

THE EMPIRE OF AGADE

ships of Meluhha, the ships of Magan, the ships of Dilmun to anchor at the quay in front of Agade . . . The hand of Illil did not give to Sargon the king a rival. Fifty-four thousand men daily eat food before him. Meluhha and Magan were somewhere on the Arabian, Dilmun on the Persian coast of the Gulf (including the Island of Bahrên), and a trade in stone and timber between these places and Sumer had been carried on for centuries.

The reference to 54,000 men is most interesting. This certainly does not represent the total even of his adult male subjects. In 1921 the population of el-'Irâq was in the neighbourhood of 2,850,000 ; and the country was, if anything, more populous in ancient times than now.³ The explanation is to be found in the statement of later chroniclers that Sargon settled 'the sons of his palace' for five marches around. These 'sons of the palace' were evidently Akkadians to whom the king granted estates in exchange for military and other services, as William the Conqueror did his Normans. A body of 54,000 feudal retainers is a very considerable force indeed, and it is certainly to this deliberate policy of settlement—the creation of a prosperous landed class bound to the crown by ties of blood and dependent upon it for subsistence—that we must attribute the strength of Sargon's dynasty.

According to late chroniclers, however, the end of Sargon's reign was troubled by revolts. He is said to have angered the god Marduk by carrying off earth from the city of Babylon : but this story bears all the marks of a late fabrication, sophisticated in order to gratify local patriotism. Babylon at this period was merely an obscure village of Akkad. Another tradition—which is probably reliable—says that he quelled the revolt and afterward waged a successful war against the 'far-flung Shubarians' of Mesopotamia proper.

Remains of Sargon's work of restoration have been traced at

¹ It is not absolutely impossible that Magan may have lain farther E. than Arabia—on the W. coast of India perhaps.

² El-'Irâq has never really recovered from the appalling destruction wrought by Houlakou Khan and his invading Mongols in A.D. 1258 which resulted in the collapse of the old irrigation-system. Prior to Houlakou's day, say the Arabs, 'a cock could hop from roof to roof, all the way from Baghdâd down to Basrah'.

Kish. The absurd planoconvex bricks had begun to go out of fashion as early as the II Dyn. of Uruk and were replaced by large flat tile-like bricks some 19 in. square. At Susa, along with other priceless Babylonian monuments which had been carried thither as plunder during the II millennium B.C., de Morgan found a sculpture of good workmanship, representing the king, wearing a long heavy beard and having his hair clubbed and rolled on his neck in the manner of the primitive sculptures of the Jemdet-Nasr Period, seated on a throne attended by a servant carrying a sunshade; and at Kish was found a mutilated marble statuette bearing the name of one of his sons, Alu-Ilum. One of his inscriptions tells us that his palace at Agade was adorned with a great sculpture of Ilbaba, the wargod of Kish. The discovery and excavation of that city (whose remains, Prof. Langdon thought, may perhaps lie beneath the great ruin-heap delightfully named Tell-Barghuthiyyat, 'Mound of the Little Female Flea', between Kish and Jemdet-Nasr) would doubtless teach us more concerning the phenomenally rapid development of art which characterized this dynasty and which reached its zenith in the reign of Sargon's grandson Narâm-Sin.

Sargon ruled, according to the chronological scheme adopted in this textbook, from about 2568 to 2513 B.C. He was succeeded by his younger son, *Rimush* (whose name was formerly misread as *Urumush*). This king was faced on his accession with a general revolt of the old Sumerian cities, headed apparently by Ur under an otherwise unknown king, Kaku. He marched South against the insurgents, overthrew Kaku, along with the rulers of Adab, Umma, Lagash, Der and Hallab, taking a total of 5,460 prisoners and killing 8,040 warriors in the field.¹ Having carried his victorious arms clean through Sumer to the Persian Gulf, he turned and, on his homeward march, overran Kazallu, an important district on the east bank of the lower Tigris which had revolted, and captured its ruler, an Akkadian named Asharid, killing no less than 12,051 warriors and taking 5,862 prisoners. These sanguinary cam-

¹ The figures vary somewhat in different inscriptions. The total of 14,576 prisoners given on one monument probably refers to all the captives taken during the whole reign.

THE EMPIRE OF AGADE

paings made him master of el-'Irâq ; but the nobles of Elam and Barahsi, who had been subdued by his father, were also in revolt. He accordingly attacked them. *Rimush, king of Kish, overcame Abalgamash, king of Barahsi, in battle ; and his hand seized Sidgau, governor of Barahsi . . . Between Awan and Susa, by releasing against them (?) the rivers Kabnitum and Nerudam he drowned them out (?) ; and he destroyed the cities of Elam and overthrew their walls.* In a second campaign, apparently in the same district, he inflicted a loss of 9,624 killed and captured upon the enemy. Sidgau of Barahsi had previously been captured by Sargon and evidently set at liberty again without having learned his lesson. Rimush probably put him to death.

The records of Sargon and Rimush show that a fully-organized society existed in Persia, as in el-'Irâq, and this is confirmed by excavations at Susa. From the time of Rimush, part at least of Elam came finally under the dominion of the kings of Agade. Akkadians actually settled in the land, and in the ensuing age we find the lords of Susa abandoning the old 'Proto-Elamite' script and carving inscriptions in cuneiform writing and Akkadian speech. The great conquerors of the Dyn. of Agade were everywhere missionaries of the Sumero-Akkadian civilization.

After a reign of but nine years, this warlike king met with a violent death. According to later tradition, he was murdered by his own courtiers who *killed him with their seals*. This phrase puzzled historians until it was most ingeniously pointed out by Mr. C. J. Gadd (*History and Monuments of Ur*, Ch. III) that : 'cylinder-seals were often worn attached by a bead chain to a formidable copper pin used for fastening the clothing, and it would be much more feasible that the courtiers

“stikede him with boydekins anoon
With many a wounde, and thus they lete him lye.”

than that they should have tried to break his head with the seals themselves.' It was an ugly enough end, in any event.

Rimush was succeeded by *Manishtusu* or *Manishtishshu*, whom Nur-Ninsubur calls his elder brother. That the latter should not have been crowned in the first place is puzzling, and one is entitled to suspect that it was his jealousy which brought

about the assassination ; but he was not permitted to enjoy the fruits of his crime in entire peace. As soon as he had mounted the throne (probably in about 2503 B.C.) he was faced with a rebellion. Dividing his army into two parts (so his long inscription tells us), he was able to subdue all opposition and then to undertake the great military exploit of his reign. This began with the conquest or reconquest of the important Elamite principalities of Anshan and Shirihum, after which, *he crossed the Lower Sea (i.e. the Gulf) in ships. Thirty-two kings of cities across the sea gathered together for battle and he conquered them and destroyed their cities . . . As far as the silver-mines he took possession : and the mountains across the Lower Sea—he carried off their stones and made his statue and dedicated it to Illil.* This is the earliest record of a Babylonian naval expedition, though the Egyptians, as we know, had been sending argosies up the Syrian coast since the XXX cent. B.C. Silver is not, so far as the present author can ascertain, worked anywhere in Persia or Arabia to-day, and the Babylonian supplies of that metal were normally obtained from Asia Minor. But the Lower Sea can only be the Persian Gulf, so the probability is that there were once silver workings somewhere in South-Eastern Persia or Baluchistan which have since dropped out of memory or become exhausted.

The best-known inscription of Manishtusu is on the so-called 'Cruciform Monument' now in the British Museum, an odd-looking stone pillar, cross-shaped in section, inscribed with a charter of endowment to the temple of the sungod, E-barra in Sippar. The king's name is missing, but the historical parts of the text are duplicates of passages from other inscriptions of Manishtusu. The fantastic lavishness of the gifts consecrated to Shamash and Aya (as the Akkadians called the god and goddess of the sun) is a proof of the wealth which flowed into Agade as a result of the foreign conquests and the control of the great trading-routes. The temple was rebuilt and its standard revenues in grain, dates, oil, milk, honey, wine, sheep and oxen were doubled. Twenty sheep and four oxen were offered daily on the altars of the sun and afterwards, of course, eaten by the huge personnel of the temple. The whole revenues of eight towns in Sumer and Akkad were assigned to

THE EMPIRE OF AGADE

the priesthood in perpetuity ; and the idols were adorned with rich garments and a fabulous weight of gold and silver jewellery.

Still more interesting from the historical standpoint is a broken obelisk of fine black diorite, about 5 ft. high, found at Susa and now in the Louvre. This bears the detailed record of one of those transactions whereby the kings of Agade surrounded themselves by a class of feudal retainers of their own race. It commemorates the purchase of four very large estates in different parts of Sumer and Akkad. Each was made up of a number of small freeholds which the king purchased from their owners for silver, giving also compensation in commodities to the families of the latter, for it seems that in early Sumer all the members of a family were considered to have a legal interest in land owned by any one of them. The king further charged himself with the maintenance and resettlement of the evicted tenants, to the number of 1,651 persons. The whole transaction is strictly equitable.

That Susa was now an integral part of the Akkadian Empire is proved by the discovery there of part of a limestone statuette of Manishtusu which had been dedicated to the local god Naruti on his behalf. Though much damaged, this bust is still a very fine and vigorous piece of work, curiously recalling the older sculptures from Eshnunna. The king wears a very full square beard and has his hair bobbed short at the nape of the neck. We have here a clear promise of the artistic splendour of the next reign.

Manishtusu was succeeded (probably in about 2488 B.C.) by his son *Narâm-Sîn*, perhaps the greatest of the rulers of Agade. This redoubtable monarch had, on his accession, to cope with the usual revolt. Not only did Uruk, Ur, Nippur, Umma, Awan and Kazallu seek to throw off the yoke of Agade, but Kish itself, along with the Akkadian cities of Sippar, Dilbat and Kuthah, rose in arms under the leadership of a pretender who styled himself Iphur-Kish ('He who has organized Kish'). *Narâm-Sîn*, however, crushed all these domestic foes with little difficulty. It was probably immediately after doing so that he took the novel step of proclaiming himself to be a god incarnate upon earth. King-worship, as we have seen, was not unknown in Sumer, but there had not, so far as we can tell, been any

instance of it since the time of Aannipadda of the I Dyn. of Ur. Narâm-Sin's reason for reviving it was probably the hope that it would consolidate his kingdom and promote a feeling of national instead of local patriotism in el-'Irâq. Separatism, parochial-mindedness, was the great political failing of the Sumerians. The kings of Agade strove to weld the jealous city-states into a nation, to create something larger and more durable than the petty kingdoms of Kish and Uruk. It was to this end that the agrarian policy of Sargon and Manishtusu, the bloody punitive expeditions of Rimush and the self-deification of Narâm-Sin were alike directed. *The divine Narâm-Sin, the mighty, god of Agade, king of the Four Quarters* was the official titulary of the new king.

The foreign campaigns of Narâm-Sin fall into three divisions—(a) against the lands of the Persian Gulf, (b) against Syria and Asia Minor and (c) against the tribesmen of the Kurdish hills. Their exact number and order are uncertain. In the region of the Gulf, Narâm-Sin tells us that he conquered *Manium the mighty, king of Magan* and obtained stone from his country. A wild theory was once current which identified this Manium or Mannum with 'Menes', the legendary founder of the united kingdom of Egypt. It is enough to say here that Menes (if he ever really lived) reigned at least 700 years before Narâm-Sin. It is true that, by a misunderstanding of the old texts, Assyrian scribes in the VII cent. B.C. used the name Magan for Egypt, but the real neighbourhood of that country was certainly east of el-'Irâq.

Of Narâm-Sin's conquest, or rather reconquest, of Syria we have an account in the late copy of the inscriptions from two of his statues which was discovered at Ur. From this we learn that he subdued all Arman and Ibla from the Euphrates as far as the district of Ulisu, which is thought to have lain near Tripoli on the North Syrian coast. This was the position of Ibla, as we have previously seen, and Arman probably lay slightly to the south-east of it, nearer the Euphrates. The king adds that, with the help of the Syrian god Dagan, he captured Rid-Adad, king of Arman, and put him in bonds. As for his adventures farther north-west, into Asia Minor, a Hittite chronicle or legend, discovered by the German excavators at

Boghazköi there, speaks of a war between Narâm-Sin and Pamba king of Kussar. Kussar probably lay in the eastern Taurus Mts., so that if the story be historical (and there is no good reason to doubt it) Narâm-Sin penetrated at least as far into Asia Minor as Sargon did.

His remaining series of campaigns has, really, the greatest historical importance, for it presages the unlooked-for ruin that was to befall the Empire of Agade. He tells us in his inscriptions that he overcame Puttimadal king of Shimurru and Satuni of Lulubum. Shimurru is the district known to us from later records as *Simuru* or *Simurum*, and was apparently part of that fertile plain on the east bank of the middle Tigris which was afterwards the kingdom of Assyria. The nation called Lulubî inhabited a section of the western foothills of the Mountain Barrier, somewhat south of Simuru, probably about the slopes of the mountain now called Pir Magrûn. A more difficult country for fighting cannot be imagined. The present writer traversed the more mountainous part of the land of Simuru on horseback in 1931, and came to the conclusion that a determined force of natives could hold it against anything short of aeroplanes. The towering mountains are divided from one another by valleys whose sides are (to borrow the words of an Assyrian king who carried his arms through the same district) *steep like the sides of a fish*. Tracks known only to the local villager creep like spiders' threads along the flanks of precipices. The writer well remembers his astonishment whilst negotiating a particularly difficult mountain-track, at seeing a flock of sheep apparently suspended in mid-air against the opposite wall of the valley. Enquiry as to this phenomenon elicited the reply that the people of the district were very clever and could find a way where a stranger would break his neck. In later times—so the records of Assyrian conquerors tell us—the inhabitants, when threatened by an invader, would withdraw themselves to the highest mountain and mock pursuit.

Only a serious necessity, continual acts of aggression on the part of the mountaineers, could have induced Marâm-Sin to campaign in such a terrifying region : nor can one blame him for the *éclat* with which he celebrated his victories there. In what is now called the Derbend-i-Giawr, the 'Gorge of the

Unbeliever', he caused a great rock-sculpture to be carved, representing himself, armed with axe and bow, trampling upon the corpses of two slaughtered Lulubî. The writer has not had the good fortune to see the original, but judging from reproductions, this must be certainly the most vigorous, and—despite some faults of proportion—one of the most beautiful sculptures ever produced by a Babylonian artist. Narâm-Sin had good reason to be proud of his victories, as we shall see. An ominous movement had begun among the eastern tribes, and his generalship is sufficiently attested to by the fact that he contrived to stem it for his lifetime.

The monuments of Narâm-Sin are, with the exception of those of Gudea of Lagash,¹ the finest of all Babylonian sculptures. There can be no doubt that the infusion of new blood resultant upon the Akkadian invasion had caused an artistic renaissance in el-'Irâq. Sculpture is, of all arts, the best criterion of a nation's decadence or vigour. The sculpture of the native Sumerians had continuously degenerated since the time of the archaic statues of Eshnunna. Now, under the Dyn. of Agade, new masterpieces were produced. First and foremost, we may consider the famous 'Stela of Victory' which was carved to commemorate the subdual of Satuni of Lulubu and which was among the incomparable *cache* of archæological treasures unearthed at Susa by de Morgan. It is a yellow limestone stela, a shade over six feet high and now—alas!—a trifle broken. On it is sculptured in *mezzo-rilievo*, and with a freedom and truth of composition never even approached by earlier or later Babylonian artists, a hillside, terminating in a conical peak, upon which—just as we have previously heard—the defeated Lulubî are taking refuge. The lower slopes of the hill are set with trees, through which the light-armed soldiers of Agade are advancing with standards and lances in their hands. The eyes of all of them are turned on the colossal figure of the king who, with bow and spear in hand and wearing a horned metal helmet suggestive of our own Saxon ancestors, climbs slowly and inexorably, trampling a fallen corpse that is in his path, against the foe, one of whom uplifts his hands in a passionate gesture of surrender whilst another, his throat

¹ cf. Ch. V.

transpierced by an arrow, falls agonized to the ground. Above blaze stars, symbolic of the deities to whose favour Narâm-Sin assigns his victory.

To anyone who is closely acquainted with the history of Sumerian sculpture, a first sight of this glorious monument (which is now one of the chief adornments of the Louvre) is positively break-taking. There is a freedom, a vigour and a heroism in both its conception and execution which is barely rivalled by the best Assyrian sculpture of eighteen centuries later. The artist—who can hardly have been a Sumerian—took his pleasure in line rather than in mass. The sensuous delight, for example, with which he drew the line from the king's right shoulder to his heel must have been as unintelligible to the blockish and conservative Sumerians of the XXV cent. B.C. as it would have been sympathetic to a Greek of the V cent. Inferior to this, but still superior to any previous work in relief produced in Babylonia, is the fragment of a stela now in the Ottoman Museum at Istanbûl. It was found near the village of Pir Hussein in the province of Diarbakr in Southern Armenia and shows the king, with weapons in his hands, wearing the characteristic Akkadian royal dress—a kind of toga of some ripple-striped material arranged in flounces and passing under the right arm and over the left shoulder. He wears a conical tiara, apparently of some quilted stuff, and his beard is trimmed to a point. Evidently there was an important city at Pir Hussein which acknowledged the government of Narâm-Sin, so that Sumero-Akkadian culture had penetrated into Armenia as early as the XXV cent. B.C. Narâm-Sin's principal building was the restoration of the *ziggurat* and temple of Enlil at Nippur, of which the American excavators found clear traces masked by the work of later restorers.

The empire of Narâm-Sin was neither smaller nor less enduring than that of his grandfather Sargon. He ruled from North-Eastern Arabia to the Taurus Mts. and from central Persia to the Mediterranean. Never, before the Dyn. of Agade, had a Babylonian monarch controlled so huge a territory. The Akkadians, free from the pettiness of local interests which had hampered and was still to hamper the political progress of the Sumerians, left an enduring mark on human history by

spreading Babylonian ideas and usages into the larger world and by opening or widening the channels of communication between people and people.

The successor of Narâm-Sin was *Shargâlîsharri*,¹ son of *Dati-Ilîl*, whom Nur-Ninsubur erroneously calls 'Son of Narâm-Sin'. He was probably either a grandson or nephew of his great predecessor and he ruled—according to the chronology adopted in this text-book—from about 2450 to 2427 B.C. Like Narâm-Sin, he claimed the title of god, and on two inscribed door-sockets—those large stone cups in which the pivots of Babylonian doors rested—tells us that he carried on the former's work of restoring E-kur at Nippur.

Only seven inscriptions of his are known, and none of these record military achievements. Here, however, the peculiar Sumerian system of year-dating comes to our aid. Instead of reckoning by the reign of the king or from a fixed era, the Sumerians and Akkadians named each year after some officially designated event, usually religious or military, and tablets thus dated often give us valuable information. Three known 'date-formulæ' of the reign of Shargâlîsharri are : (a) *In the year Shargâlîsharri overcame the foray Elam and Zahara had made in the region of Akshak and Sakli*, (b) *In the year Shargâlîsharri overcame the Amorite in Basar*, (c) *In the year Shargâlîsharri established the foundation of the temple of the goddess Annunitum and the temple of Ilbaba in Babylon and captured Sharlak king of Kutum*. The first formula already shows a weakening of the great empire of Narâm-Sin, when Elamite rebels could actually invade Akkad itself. As to the 'Amorite' this is the name given by the Akkadians to their cousins of Syria, who spoke a 'W. Semitic' language (as distinct from 'E. Semitic' Akkadian) and who worshipped the gods Adad and Dagan.² Basar is probably a hill-district of North-Eastern Syria, lying just below the great curve of the Euphrates, so that Shargâlîsharri still had some measure of control over the western provinces of the Empire. The third formula is interesting for two reasons. It gives us our earliest mention of the town of *Babylon*, one day to outshine Uruk and

¹ His name was formerly misread as *Shargânîsharri* or *Shargânîshardîm* and he was confused with Sargon the Great.

² cf. Ch. VI.

Agade as the capital of el-'Irâq, and it warns us of the quarter from which destruction was rapidly descending upon the Empire of Agade. As has been the case throughout history a migration of western plainsmen into el-'Irâq was followed by one of eastern hillmen. Kutum or *Gutium* was a country of the mountains, apparently identical with the modern Hulwan, in the hills between Persia and el-'Irâq. Its inhabitants, who were now pressing forward into Babylonia, appear to have been complete savages, probably of Shubarian or kindred stock. A very finely carved stela of which fragments were discovered at Lagash and which is thought to be of the reign of Shargâlîsharri shows a battle between Akkadians and people who may well be Gutî. Evidently, Shargâlîsharri was able to hold the dangerous enemy in play ; but on his death (probably about 2426 B.C.) the Empire collapsed in a moment into hopeless anarchy. *Who was king? Who was not king?* exclaims Nur-Ninsubur. *Igigi was king, Imi was king, Nani was king, Elulu was king ;—four kings ruled three years ! Dudu ruled 21 years. Gimil-durul, son of Dudu, reigned 15 years.* This civil strife gave the Gutî precisely the opportunity that they required. They overran Babylonia, probably immediately on the death of Shargâlîsharri. The feeble and contentious last kings of the Dyn. of Agade were powerless to prevent their depredations, which must much have resembled those of the Danes in England in the IX cent. A.D. Later traditions tell us how they sacked the very temple of Annunitum that Shargâlîsharri had built at Agade and carried off the statue of the goddess to Arrapha in Assyria. The chief town of Assyria, which was later to be known as Ashur, seems originally to have been inhabited by men of Shubarian stock who had entirely adopted the Sumerian civilization. German excavations there before the War revealed a temple to the Mother-Goddess, not at all unlike that found lately at Eshnunna, containing typical Sumerian sculptures of the Early Dynastic Period. This temple, along with the rest of the primitive city, appears to have been plundered and burned to the ground, probably at some time between 2550 and 2450 B.C. It is natural to attribute this destruction to the Gutî : but an important fact is that, when we are again able to trace the history of the city, we find a new

race installed there who are neither Gutian nor Shubarian—a race destined to play an enormous part in the later history of the middle East—the *Assyrians*. The language of these men was 'E. Semitic' and varied only in minute details from Akkadian. The men who spoke it were of very individual appearance—stocky, muscular, with luxuriant hair and beards and markedly 'Jewish' features. Mr. Sidney Smith, who is the leading authority on their early history, considers that they were of mixed origin, the result of interbreeding between a Syrian tribe closely related to the Akkadians and a people from Asia Minor, and that it was they who sacked the city which they afterward rebuilt, naming it after their god *Ashur*.

Be this as it may, whilst a new Semitic power was first striking root in Assyria, the older one was crumbling to destruction in Akkad. The first experiment in imperialism had been a failure and, with the coming of the Gutî, gross darkness settles upon Babylonia.

CHAPTER IV

THE CITIES OF THE INDUS

1. *The Indus Valley Discoveries*

The Indus Valley and the adjacent riverine plain of the Panjâb, which form the easternmost division of our chosen area, have lain outside the scope of the two previous chapters. Their early history, as we are now to see, whilst parallel to that of Persia and el-'Îrâq, was quite distinct from it. It is no exaggeration to say that, until as recently as 1922, this early history was as completely unknown to European scholars as was that of Assyria before the days of Layard. Research into native records and traditions had carried our knowledge back, in a very sketchy and uncertain fashion, as far as about 1500 B.C., but no further. At that date, India was in the process of being invaded and subdued by a conquering race, hailing originally from Europe, to whom we usually give the name of *Âryans*, from a word in their own language meaning 'noble'.

Probably no scientific term has been so constantly misused by ignorant persons as has this one. Strictly speaking, the name 'Âryan' ought only to be applied to these ancient European invaders of India and Persia and to their language. But that language is one of the great and important group called (from the fact that its branches extend from England and Germany to India) *Indo-European* or *Indo-Germanic*: and consequently 'Âryan' is sometimes stretched to cover the whole of the language-group and all the races who speak any branch of it. Further, and more falsely still, it is sometimes claimed that the original *Âryans* belonged to the racial group called 'Nordic' (a group recognized by anthropologists and characterized by fair skin, blond hair, long narrow skulls and large

bones) and that from their primitive tongue all the different languages of the Indogermanic family are derived. There is no possible proof of this, any more than of the still wilder theory which would make of these (imaginary) blond 'Proto-Âryans' a nation of supermen, the founders of European culture, whose 'racially pure' descendants are the natural masters and rulers of all other peoples.

The fact of the matter is that we are no more able to speak of an 'Indogermanic Race' than of a 'Semitic Race'. At the present day, *all* the languages of Europe, save for Basque, Turkish and Maltese, belong to the Indogermanic family. Anthropologists recognize three chief racial types among European nations ¹—the Nordic, the Mediterranean (small and dark, with long narrow skull) and the Alpine (dark, with round skull). All three types are found mingled together in all parts of Europe, though in some countries one strain may predominate over the other two. No sound and cautious historian would venture to say which of these three racial groups were the inventors of the Indogermanic speech. Probably, that speech was only invented at a time when the three races were already thoroughly mingled. There is some ground for believing that it originated in the region of Austro-Hungary and Bohemia and was thence carried—no doubt by racial migrations—westward and northward over the rest of Europe and eastward through Asia Minor to Persia and India; but this is not absolutely certain. Of the race who actually introduced it into India—and to whom alone the name of Âryan can fairly be applied—we know from their own traditions that they were tall, pale-skinned, light-eyed and had prominent noses. But that is very far from saying that they belonged to the Nordic racial group, and indeed it is far more likely that they did not.

We may now return to our proper subject, which is the early history of western India. The Âryans entered that country from the west or north-east, possibly by way of Kashmîr. Their own traditions (preserved in myths and sagas by their descendants) tell us a little, but only a little, about the older

¹ There are also traces of a Mongol type which is clearly intrusive from Asia.

inhabitants whom they found already settled in the land, and with whom they waged cruel and unceasing war. These people, we learn, were small, dark-skinned and flat-faced, in contrast to the tall, big-nosed and light-complexioned newcomers. They spoke a non-Âryan tongue, and the Âryans frequently applied to them the epithet *mridhravâchah*, 'hostile-talking', which we may compare with the Greek name for foreigners, *barbaroi*, 'jargon-talkers', 'stammerers'. The ordinary Sanskrit (*i.e.* Âryan) names for these folk were *Panis* and *Dâsas* or *Dasyus*, and there is plenty of evidence that the Âryans regarded them with a mixture of contempt and fear, as creatures to be either exterminated or enslaved. *Dâśī* (the feminine of *Dâsa*), indeed, soon became the ordinary word for a female slave.

In ancient epics, the Dâsas often appear not as men at all but as malignant demons.¹ They are said to have inhabited great and wealthy cities and to have been skilled in various arts. By their magic they could raise the dead. They had castles not only in the plains but on the crests of the hills. They traded with the Âryans, but cheated and deceived them at every opportunity. Worse than this, their religion was of a type which excited the disgust of the invaders. It involved obscene ceremonies and the use of indecent emblems. The animal-sacrifices which were a most important feature of the Âryan ritual seem to have been unknown to the Dâsas, who accordingly are called 'non-sacrificers', but there appears to be evidence that at least one of the pre-Âryan tribes—the Kîkatas—sacrificed human beings to their sacred tree (the *ban-yan*) in a peculiarly horrible manner. The hatred felt by the Âryans for the Dâsas is, then, partially understandable; and here we come upon a most interesting proof of what was insisted upon in Chapter I—the continuity of history—for this hatred was the basis of that *Caste-System* which, even at the present day, is at once the dominant feature of Indian social life and a most fruitful source of discord in that unquiet land. The very Sanskrit word for 'caste', *varna*, means 'colour', and the

¹ In the same way, it is possible that European legends of brownies, fairies, *etc.*, are garbled traditions of some ancient race who were exterminated by later settlers.

original caste-distinction was simply the distinction between the pale-skinned, Sanskrit-speaking, sacrificing Āryans and the dark-skinned, 'hostile-talking, non-sacrificing' Dâsas.

Until very recently, the above was practically all that was known concerning the pre-Āryan population of India. Modern scientists had no difficulty in identifying the Dâsas of Sanskrit tradition with the various dark-skinned non-Āryan tribes of modern India who are usually referred to under the general title of *Dravidians*. Since the present-day Dravidians are mostly in a very lowly and primitive state of culture, a good deal of scepticism was felt about the stories of Dâsa wealth and skill. Their fabulously rich cities were dismissed as mere primitive earthworks, their magical arts as simply savage cunning; and it was supposed that India had possessed no civilization worthy of the name until the coming of the Āryans. The fact that the only ancient remains found in the land were stone implements and pottery tended to confirm this view, in spite of the conclusion reached, from a study of their language, by Bishop Caldwell, that the pre-Āryan Dravidians had indeed possessed kings, temples, cities, metal instruments and written books. Soon after the War, however, some very peculiar antiquities began to be found at various places in the province of Sindh (cf. Chapter I). These were *seals*, sometimes button-shaped, more usually square or oblong, with a pierced hump at the back for suspension and a flat face decorated with most exquisite designs, usually of animals, and with short inscriptions in a mysterious and hitherto unknown writing. These seals were unlike anything previously known in Indian art. Excavation has now placed a great number of them at our disposal, and a general description may be given here. The designs, like those on the cylinder-seals of Babylonia, are unquestionably of a religious character and give clear evidence that the people who made them were animal worshippers. The beasts most commonly represented are the aurochs-bull (*Bos primigenius*), the humped or Brâhman bull (*B. indicus*) and the buffalo, the Indian rhinoceros and elephant, the tiger, the cobra, the curious ghariâl or fish-eating crocodile (*Gavialis gangeticus*) and (very rarely) the antelope. Alongside these occur monsters—a man with horns and a tail, a horned tiger

and a most fantastical abortion, apparently a mixture of a ram, a bull, a tiger and an elephant. These beasts are often represented as standing in front of an object that may be a manger. The tiger sometimes gazes hungrily up into a tree in whose branches a man is perched. More complicated designs are sometimes found. One shows a horned man, certainly a god, squatting in a Buddha-like attitude, his legs drawn under him, and surrounded by a whole menagerie of beasts. The *pipal* tree or *bo* tree (*Ficus religiosa*) also appears as a religious emblem, sometimes with animals' heads growing from its trunk. This tree is sacred in India even to-day.

The art of these seal-designs is, as Sir John Marshall very truly says, 'distinguished by a breadth of treatment and a feeling for line and plastic form that has rarely been surpassed in glyptic art'. Equally fascinating is the extraordinary script of which one or two lines accompany nearly all the pictures. Apparently, it was read from right to left, and since it employed a large number of different characters it cannot have been alphabetic. The signs which compose it are, as is the case with cuneiform, derived from pictures or objects: but the process of conventionalization has not gone so far as in the cuneiform script, and it is still possible to identify the pictures of a man, a chair, a house, a bird, a fish, a tiger, a wheel, a pair of arms, *etc.* Over this mysterious writing, English scholars have racked their brains in vain. Soon after the discovery of the first seals, Sir Alexander Cunningham suggested that it must be the ancestor of the later *Brahmi* script, in which some important Sanskrit documents of the IV cent. B.C. are written. Prof. Langdon, who was also of this opinion, thought he had been able to identify nine of the signs as 'determinatives' of words and some others as diacritical marks or accents, but neither he nor any other responsible authority has ventured to decide in what language the inscriptions are written, still less to offer a translation.

Scholars, however, were not slow to recognize that these seals represented an earlier stage of civilization than any previously encountered in India. The fact was proved beyond question by the discovery of two typical Indus seals (obviously imported) in el-'Irâq at levels which could certainly be dated to the time

of the Dyn. of Agade (about 2568–2416 B.C., cf. Chapter III). One was found by Prof. Langdon at Kish and the other by Dr. Frankfort at Eshnunna. Other seals, found at Kish and Ur, belonged to a period later than the Dyn. of Agade but earlier than 1900 B.C., so that there was definite proof that the Indian civilization which produced these charming little objects flourished at least as early as the period 2600–1900 B.C.—*i.e.* that it was established more than 1,000 years before the coming of the Āryans.

The chief site to yield the relics just described was the ruin-mound called Harappâ on the River Râvi, one of the 'Five Streams' of the Panjâb. Here, about 300 miles north-west of Delhi, were to be found extensive remains of a great brick-built city, strongly resembling the typical ruined cities of Babylonia and showing signs of having been occupied over a very long period. Unhappily this great ruin had suffered a similar fate to that of so many of the Babylonian cities which it recalled, having served as a quarry for modern villagers in search of the excellent burnt brick which it contained. Even English railway-builders, who should have known much better, abused it in this way, so that there was comparatively little left for the archæologist to gain from what must once have been a veritable treasure-house of antiquities. It was all the more fortunate, then, that in 1922 a gifted Indian archæologist, Mr. R. D. Banerji, excavating the remains of a *stûpa*, or ancient Buddhist shrine and monastery, at a site called *Mohenjo-Daro* in the Province of Sindh, discovered copious traces of an ancient city lying just beneath the Buddhist ruins.

It is particularly pleasant to reflect that the opening of a source of information which was to extend our knowledge of Indian history by at least 1,000 years was achieved by a native of the country, and that the subsequent exploitation of this and other sites has been very largely in the hands of Indians whose keenness, efficiency and scholarship have been all that the most exacting critic could desire. India, in this respect, is in contrast with Egypt and el-'Irâq where almost all the responsible work of excavation has been done by foreigners. On the other hand, all future students of Indian antiquities will remember with gratitude the names of Sir

THE INDUS VALLEY DISCOVERIES

John Marshall, former Director-General of Archæology, and of two experienced English excavators, Dr. E. Mackay and Mr. H. Hargreaves, both of whom co-operated with the Indian antiquarians at Mohenjo-Daro.

Mohenjo-Daro lies on the Indus, 25 miles south of the town of Nârâkâna and about 140 miles or so north-east of Karâchi. The district of Nârâkâna, commonly called the 'Garden of Sindh', is one of the most fertile in the Indus Valley. Its climate is fierce and variable, frost being common in winter and the thermometer frequently standing at 120° in summer. The modern average rainfall is no higher than that of el-'Irâq, so that here, as there, irrigation is a prime necessity of life : but there seems ample evidence that the climate was damper in ancient times. Further, even as late as the Middle Ages, a second river—the Mihrân—is known to have flowed through Sindh east of the Indus, so that, on all counts, we may assume the country to have been more fertile in ancient times than now. As already stated, the ruin-mounds of Mohenjo-Daro were crowned, in the II or III century A.D., by a Buddhist *stûpa*. Mr. Banerji's excavation showed that the Buddhist monks had been no more scrupulous in their treatment of antiquities than were the Panjâbi villagers and English engineers at Harappâ. Their whole monastery was constructed of bricks dug from the older ruins. It is thus all the more to Mr. Banerji's credit that he at once recognized that the difference of a few feet in level between two lots of identical masonry represented a lapse in time of about 2,000 years.

The *stûpa* buildings, however, only covered a very small section of the ruin-mounds, which mark what was once a great and populous city—how great, we may never learn, for it seems that the mounds may once have been more extensive than they are to-day. Excavations carried out on a large scale in various parts of the city have penetrated through seven successive levels of occupation. Below these, the soil is now unfortunately waterlogged, owing to the bed of the Indus having risen since early times, so that the lowest and oldest strata of Mohenjo-Daro never will be excavated. The strata which have been examined all contain the well-preserved ruins of a great number of very fine buildings of burnt brick.

THE CITIES OF THE INDUS

Most of these, as will be seen presently, are private houses, and the splendid quality of their masonry, their size and luxurious appointments, suggest a really astonishing degree of civilization obtaining in the India of 4,000 years ago.

The excavators divide their seven levels into three 'periods'—levels 1, 2 and 3 'Late Period', 4, 5 and 6 'Intermediate Period', and 7 'Early Period'. The reader who has become familiar, from the two previous chapters, with the succession of Periods in the history of el-'Irâq-el-'Ubeid Period, Uruk Period, *etc.*, *etc.*, will naturally expect the three stages of civilization at Mohenjo-Daro to differ equally widely from one another and show equally clear evidence of the infiltration of new races, bearers of new traditions. But exactly the reverse is true. Nothing surprises one more in the culture of that city than its absolute homogeneity from first to last. The civilization of the lowest excavated level does not appear to have contrasted in a single important respect with that of the highest. The same materials were used in the same way in both of them. It is true that the Late Period seems to be one of degeneracy at the end of which the city was abandoned for good, but there is no suggestion that the men of that decaying age really belonged to a different stage of culture—still less to a different race—from that of their more vigorous predecessors. This is partly accounted for by the fact that the damp and salty soil of Mohenjo-Daro and the frequent inundations to which the city seems to have been liable would make the life of its buildings fairly short, so that the seven different layers of occupation need not, in the opinion of Sir John Marshall, represent a total period of more than five centuries. But even so, the absolute continuity of civilization during those centuries is remarkable enough. If we take the parallel case of Babylonia during the 500 years or so between the I Dynasty of Ur and the Dynasty of Agade, we hear a very different story. The difference between the civilization of the days of Aanni-padda and of Sargon is the difference of chalk from cheese. The veriest tyro could distinguish between a seal-cylinder or a clay tablet of the I Dyn. and one of the Dyn. of Agade, whereas even an expert would be hard put to it, in most cases, to say whether a given object came from the first or the seventh

THE INDUS VALLEY DISCOVERIES

level at Mohenjo-Daro. It is not too much to say that, so far as material culture goes, nothing of importance happened at that city during the whole period for which evidence is available. The really exciting moments of its history, the days of change and invention, of racial mixture and the cross-fertilization of cultures, happened in an age whose remains are lost for ever beneath the water.

The exact dating of the seven accessible levels of Mohenjo-Daro is something of a problem. The Indus seal found at Eshnunna in a context which dated it accurately to the XXVI-XXV cent. B.C. belongs to a type confined to the Late Period at Mohenjo-Daro, so that on this evidence we should be tempted to put the Early Period as far back as 3000 B.C. On the other hand, a similar seal was found at Ur in a tomb which cannot possibly be earlier than 2150 B.C. and might be as late as the XX cent. These two seals are not the typical square or round stamp-seals, but cylinders, quite Babylonian in shape though Indian in design. Such cylinder-seals are rare at Mohenjo-Daro and belong, as we have seen, only to the Late Period. On the other hand, a typical Indian stamp-seal with an inscription in Indus characters turned up at Ur in a grave which must be older—though not much older—than the Dyn. of Agade.¹ Eshnunna has produced further evidence, in the shape of very extraordinary pottery, certainly imported direct from India, that there was a brisk trade between the two countries in the age of Sargon. There seems, then, good reason for saying that the Late Period at Mohenjo-Daro falls in the XXVI-XXV cents. B.C. and the Intermediate and Early Periods in the XXIX-XXVII cents.

But one very disconcerting fact must be recognized. Indian archæologists are agreed that the city of Harappâ continued to flourish after the desertion of Mohenjo-Daro, and that the most recent remains found there are, consequently, later than the Late Period of the latter city. Yet among these Late Harappâ antiquities was one of the odd little conical copper 'toilet-cases' which are found in the so-called 'Royal Tombs' at Ur and Kish and which can hardly be later, there, than about 2900 B.C. ! The explanation must surely be that these

¹ See C. J. Gadd in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, Vol. XVIII.

THE CITIES OF THE INDUS

little objects were borrowed by the Sumerians from the Indians, or *vice versa*, and continued popular in India after they had gone out of fashion in Babylonia. The question of trade between the two countries will be discussed further. So far as chronology is concerned, it seems safe to conclude that the Indus civilization was already firmly established—static and unchanging—in perhaps 2800 B.C., and that it was still in existence as late as 2000 B.C. In the present writer's opinion, it must undoubtedly have continued until the coming of the Aryans in about 1500 B.C., but of this there is not yet any certain proof.

2. *Mohenjo-Daro*

We may now attempt to make a picture of the city of Mohenjo-Daro as it was in its splendour, and of the life and ways of the strange men who built it. The results of excavation there have been published by Sir John Marshall in three superb volumes¹ which are a model of what such works should be. They contain first-hand accounts of their own work by the principal excavators and discussions of particular points by English experts in archæology and anthropology. These are intended for the specialist rather than the amateur, but the magnificent illustrations should be seen by everyone who wishes to understand what is undoubtedly the most important archæological discovery of the century.

Although seven different building-levels are distinguished above the water-line, the topography of the city seems to have altered so slightly during the five known centuries of its history that the following brief general description is valid for the whole period. This fact is to be explained partly by the unchanging nature of the whole Indus Culture, and partly by what is the most extraordinary feature of the buildings found. The city of Mohenjo-Daro in the III millennium B.C. was a *planned* city like Mannheim in Germany or Bournville in England. It was the creation of forethought, not of chance. Instead of meandering vaguely, intersecting where the spirit moved them, beginning in caprice and ending in confusion,

¹ *Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Valley Civilisation*, edited by Sir J. Marshall.

MOHENJO-DARO

as did the streets of ancient Ur and Kish, its avenues ran in bold parallels, east to west and north to south, as straight as the mason's cord could make them. They crossed one another more or less at regular intervals and strictly at right angles. Nowhere was a building permitted to encroach upon the public highway, though in ancient Sumer there appears to have been no legal reason why a citizen should not take in half the previous width of the street for his own use. Only at the end of the Late Period, when the city was tottering toward its fall, did this strict surveillance on the part of the municipal authorities (whoever they were) cease to be exercised and Mohenjo-Daro sink into the unregulated squalor of the typical Asiatic slum-town.

This reasoned and ordered state, this evidence of clear thinking and careful organization on the part of the Indians of forty-five centuries ago, astonishes the writer perhaps more than it will do the reader. In order to appreciate it at its full value, it is necessary to have spent a few days in the capital of any modern and progressive Asiatic state, to have been hopelessly and indefinitely lost, in broad daylight and within a hundred yards of a tram-terminus, in a maze of reeking alleys, any of which a single loaded donkey can block as effectively as a cork blocks the neck of a bottle. The present writer, after being most courteously entertained by a well-to-do citizen of Baghdād, has stepped out of his host's front-door only to plunge knee-deep into an open cess-pit in the road. Or to bring the matter nearer home: three thousand years or more after the ancient culture of India had collapsed in ruin, it was still the custom of the London citizens to turn their pigs out of doors to feed on the garbage of the streets. As late as the beginning of the last century no stranger would have dreamed of trying to find his way about the Old Town of Edinburgh without the help of a professional guide. Give these considerations their just weight, and the achievement of the citizens of Mohenjo-Daro will be seen for what it was. Their streets varied from 9 to 34 ft, wide and sometimes ran in an undeviating straight line for as much as half a mile. They were unpaved, however, and must have been wretchedly muddy during the rainy season. Below every

THE CITIES OF THE INDUS

principal street, and many of the lesser ones, ran a main drain from 1 to 2 ft. deep, provided with sumps and inspection-traps at regular intervals, and covered with brick or stone. Into these mains there opened the drains of the individual houses, each one provided with its own sump-pit, and the mains in turn apparently opened into great vaulted culverts giving upon the river. This elaborate and completely modern sanitary system, which must have made Mohenjo-Daro the healthiest city of antiquity, is quite as noteworthy an example of the difference between the Indian and Sumerian mind as is the town-planning. The Sumerian houses of about 2000 B.C. discovered at Ur contained, in most cases, vertical pottery drainage-shafts beneath their courtyards, but these had no outlet into a public sewer which would remove impurities from the city. Ur no more possessed a municipal drainage-system than a municipal tram-service.¹

The vast majority of buildings uncovered at Mohenjo-Daro are houses of well-to-do and middling citizens. These, too, are superior in every respect to the similar remains found in el-'Irâq. The Sumerians, as we have seen, frequently used crude sun-dried *libn* even for important structures. This material seems to have been almost unknown at Mohenjo-Daro except in the foundation-platforms on which large buildings were raised. Houses and public institutions alike were built throughout of very fine lightly-fired brick of an attractive red tint. The bricks were flat and oblong, far more practical than the wretched plano-convex bricks of Sumer with which they must have been partly contemporary. Shaped bricks were used for particular purposes. Mud was the usual mortar though lime was known. The actual masonry was of the finest quality. Despite the destructive action of what Sir John Marshall calls 'the unkind soil of Mohenjo-Daro', the successively rebuilt walls of some of the houses remain standing to a height of 25 ft. Stone was as rare in the cities of the Indus as in those of the Euphrates.

¹ At Eshnunna an Akkadian palace has been found provided with a bathroom and privies connecting with a vaulted sewer. In view of the close trade-relationship between India and Akkad at that date we are certainly safe in attributing this improvement to Indian influence.

MOHENJO-DARO

Though well constructed, the dwelling-houses of the ancient Indians cannot, at any rate from the street, have presented a very pleasing or interesting appearance. 'Anyone walking for the first time through Mohenjo-Daro,' says Sir John Marshall, 'might fancy himself surrounded by the ruins of some present-day working town in Lancashire.' The brick walls were unrelieved by any trace of ornament and, as in the modern East, rarely and grudgingly provided with windows. Certain curious grilles of pottery whose fragments have been discovered may have closed windows in upper storeys, now destroyed, and Sir John Marshall thinks it possible that some houses may have been crowned with tall corbelled spires of brick. The spire has always been a characteristic feature of Indian architecture and is, indeed, almost as essential a part of the Hindu temple as the *ziggurat* was of the Babylonian. The outer walls of the houses, which were as much as 3 ft. thick at the bottom, had a pronounced inward slope or batter. The result of this was that the streets tended to become broader with each successive rebuilding, as the stumps of the old walls were used as foundations for the new ones which were thus set farther back from the street-edge.

Within, the houses were sensible and commodious if not dazzlingly beautiful. Each was provided with that essential of all Oriental domestic economy, past or present, a courtyard. This was certainly surrounded by a wooden balcony with access to the upper rooms. It appears likely that the cooking was done here under an open-sided shelter. Generally on the ground-floor was the bathroom—a luxury unknown in Sumer—and the lavatory. The former was a small room with a brick floor sloped toward a drain in one corner. Here, the Indian of forty-five centuries ago could sluice himself with water from large pottery *chattis* and also—it appears—oil and scrape his body as did the athletes of Greece. Pottery instruments have been found which are pretty certainly scrapers. In well-to-do houses a whole suite of rooms was sometimes found occupying a level midway between the ground-floor and the upper storey, being raised on a solid block of masonry. These rooms are thought to have been the private quarters of the family who were thus protected against the inconveniences of

floods. Another astonishing proof of the excellence of the ancient Indian municipal services is the presence, in the outer wall of some large houses, of a rubbish-chute connecting with a brick ashbin in the street which would presumably be cleared regularly by the town dustmen.

A typical better-class house, 'House VIII of HR Area', described by Sir John Marshall, was roughly T-shaped in plan, with a street frontage of 85 ft. and a maximum depth of 97 ft. Access to the court was gained through a lobby provided with a porter's lodge. Off this opened a room with a raised floor, containing a well, and a pair of rooms which Sir John Marshall regards as guest-rooms. The ceiling of one of these, made of beams of deodar-wood, was still recognizable. It was less than 7 ft. from the floor. There is abundant evidence that the ancient Indians were a people of low stature. The bathroom gave on the courtyard and here, at some time after the building had been put up, a staircase was constructed, leading to the floor above. The cooking-place was in the courtyard and on the opposite side was a range of four small chambers which may have been servants' quarters. The family living-rooms, four in number, with a corridor, were at the back of the house and raised on a solid platform of brick. These were approached by a stair from the court and had also two private stairs leading to the ground.

Such, then, were the private dwellings. They constitute by far the largest proportion of the buildings at Mohenjo-Daro. In el-'Irâq, the excavator's chief interest is in the great temples of which every city will contain at least two or three, one at least possessing a *ziggurat*. Of almost equal importance—provided always that they have not been too efficiently plundered—are the cemeteries. Only when these have been investigated, as a rule, will the digger turn his attention to the residential quarters. In India it is a different story. Mohenjo-Daro was a city built for men, not gods. So far, no building that is certainly a temple has come to light. Possibly the Buddhist *stûpa* was raised upon what, more than two dozen centuries earlier, had been holy ground. Possibly it was not. But it was near the *stûpa* that Sir John Marshall excavated an extraordinary public building which may well have served a

MOHENJO-DARO

religious purpose and to which the excavators have given the name of the 'Great Bath'.

The Great Bath is precisely what it is called—a swimming-bath on a scale which would do credit to a modern seaside hotel. The building which housed it was roughly about 170 ft. long and 95 ft. wide, and rested on a very massive and elaborate substructure of brick and clay. The actual bathing-pool measured roughly 39 by 23 ft. and was surrounded on three sides by a pierced wall or series of brick piers giving access to a cloister flanked by a number of rooms including eight small bathrooms similar to those found in private houses. The tank could be filled and emptied by means of a vaulted culvert—a noteworthy piece of engineering—measuring a trifle under $2\frac{1}{2}$ ft. wide and 7 ft. high. The number of small chambers adjoining the tank and cloister seems to suggest—unless they are dressing-rooms, which is unlikely—that this elaborate and indeed monumental building was something more than simply a public resort of pleasure and hygiene. Bathing is an absolutely essential feature of modern Hindu ritual. Every temple has its sacred tank for the ablutions of the worshippers, and to bathe once in his life in holy Ganges is as much a religious duty to the Hindu as the performance of the *Haj* is to the Muslim. Accordingly, it is generally assumed that the Great Bath was not simply a bathing-place but a sacred bathing-place and that its chambers and private bathrooms were for the use of the priests. If this be so, then it is the nearest approach to a temple yet found at Mohenjo-Daro.

Space forbids a minute account of other buildings excavated. Two very large ones, of obscure purpose and design, one of them covering an area of about 27,000 sq. ft., may have been municipal offices or the residences of rulers or governors. A strange hall, its roof supported by four rows of five large rectangular brick pillars, is thought by some to have been a meeting-place and by others a covered bazâr. In general, as we have seen, the architecture of Mohenjo-Daro was plain and utilitarian but of a decidedly high order. The elaborately recessed doorways, the semicircular pilasters and the round brick columns, beloved of early Sumerian architects, were unknown. Nor do we meet with the coloured washes, the

THE CITIES OF THE INDUS

exquisite cone-mosaics and the rich wall-inlays which are familiar to us on the Euphrates ; whilst the ancient Indians seem to have known only the corbelled vault and perhaps the pyramidal spire at a time when the Sumerians were already masters of the ring-vault and the dome. On the other hand, the general level of workmanship in India was certainly higher than in Sumer. The buildings there were not ornamental but massive, finished, 'Roman, built to endure.

Unfortunately, aside from the seals already mentioned and the pottery, which will be discussed in its place, we do not possess so many examples of ancient Indian art as we could wish. Statues and statuettes in stone, glazed frit and terracotta are known, but only rarely. The artistic merit of the seals has been discussed. With them may be considered some curious little engraved copper tablets, bearing similar short inscriptions and animal-designs (including several of a peculiar creature which is perhaps a hare). Their purpose is uncertain and, in general, their workmanship is less excellent than that of the seals. A certain amount of sculpture has been recovered, consisting entirely of statues and statuettes in the round. So far as the present writer is aware, the ancient Indians did not share the fondness of the Sumerians for bas-relief. The statues are of curiously varied artistic merit. The fragment of a large seated image found at Mohenjo-Daro is—judged by a photograph—of no better work than the average Sumerian statuary of about the same period, and vastly inferior to the fine Akkadian pieces of Narâm-Sin's day.

The same applies to one or two limestone heads which, however, give us an idea of the appearance of the ruling class in the Indus Valley during the III millennium B.C. These men had low foreheads, short straight noses, slightly—but only slightly—retreating chins and thick protruding lips. A sparse beard was worn on cheeks and chin. The hair, which appears to have been absolutely straight and without wave, was either clipped short on the neck or else allowed to grow very long indeed. In the latter case, it was braided, wrapped round the skull and knotted into a big bun or chignon at the back of the head. This is most interesting and important, for two very famous Sumerian antiquities—the

MOHENJO-DARO

golden helmet of Meskalamdug from Ur and Eannatum's Stela of the Vultures from Lagash—show an exactly similar way of dressing the hair. The helmet must be at least a century older than anything found at Mohenjo-Daro, but the stela will be about contemporary with the Early Period there. This point will be discussed later in more detail.

Very different from the Mohenjo-Daro sculptures is the amazing fragment of a nude male statuette in red stone found by Mr. A. K. Vats in Harappâ. Even in its present mutilated condition, the writer has no hesitation in describing this as—with the exception of some Assyrian bas-reliefs 2,000 years later in date—the finest ancient work of art ever found in the middle East. It shows us the body and thighs of a young man whose head and arms had apparently been carved separately and mortised to the trunk. They are now missing, and the legs are broken off. Nevertheless, the modelling of the body, the exquisite fidelity and exactness with which Nature has been observed and reproduced, the easy and graceful carriage of the figure, fill one with amazement. For pure simplicity and feeling, nothing to compare with this glorious little masterpiece was produced until the great age of Hellas. Even the best Egyptian sculpture seems stiff and conventional by comparison. The human body is admittedly the highest subject for the sculptor, and never again, until the days of Pheidias and Praxiteles, was the human body to receive such free and loving treatment, so unhampered by archaism or conventional stiffness, as it did from the unknown Indian artist of the III millennium B.C.

Speaking of this and another statue, of less perfect workmanship, found at Harappâ by Rai-Bahadur Daya Ram Sahni, Sir John Marshall says: 'When I first saw them I found it difficult to believe that they were prehistoric; they seemed so completely to upset all established ideas about early art.' This is a very just remark. The sculptors of Sumer, Akkad and Egypt worked under the spell of definite conventions which insisted on their treating natural objects as abstractions rather than as realities. Their men and animals are not men and animals so much as decorative patterns based on human or animal outlines. The Indian artists were realists who loved

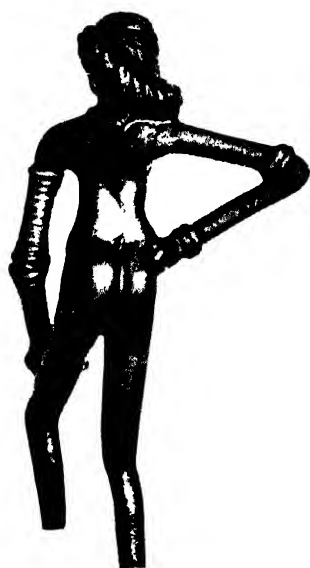
THE CITIES OF THE INDUS

and served Nature herself. This is perfectly illustrated by yet another masterpiece, this time from Mohenjo-Daro, the *exquisite bronze figure of a dancing-girl also discovered by Rai-Bahadur Daya Ram Sahni. Though more impressionistic in style than the stone sculptures, this figure, which is cast in one piece, astonishes one by the ease and naturalness of its posture. It is further of interest because it shows us what a temple-woman—for such it must surely represent—of ancient India looked like : a slender girl, probably in her early 'teens, unclothed but with her left arm cased from wrist to shoulder in bangles, and her hair, which is twisted round the back of her neck and tossed on to her right shoulder, probably confined in a net. Women's fashions are further illustrated by a number of rough terra-cotta figures showing goddesses or the like wearing long skirts, the upper part of their bodies bare, and having curious and elaborate hooped head-dresses—perhaps their natural hair dressed over wicker frames. A broken steatite statuette of a bearded man, of which we shall speak again, wears a rich robe, stamped or embroidered with a trefoil design, and a light fillet with an ornament in the centre bound round the short hair.*

Among other works of art we may mention beads of various semi-precious stones, of frit, of gold, silver and gilt bronze and of turquoise : small stone and bronze figures of animals, some of great merit ; delightful little glazed figures of squatting monkeys, and some carvings in ivory. Gold, silver and copper earrings and finger-rings, nose-studs of blue glaze, bracelets of metal and shell and others, very curious, of pottery with inscriptions, and metal hairpins have all been found and show us how the men and women of ancient India adorned their persons. Other relics give us glimpses into the life they led. Pottery cages suggest a fondness for pet birds, and the discovery of skulls of the mongoose lead one to imagine that this delightful little animal—the indefatigable enemy of snakes and vermin—was domesticated then as now. As in Sumer, dice and board-games provided amusement, and what appear to be miniature sets of ninepins have come to light. Certain buildings at street-corners have been plausibly identified as restaurants—the prototypes of the Corner Houses of to-day !—where men



SKELLTONS IN A ROOM OF THE LATE PERIOD, MOHENJO-DARO



BRONZE FIGURE OF A DANCING GIRL, MOHENJO-DARO.
*[Copy right Government of India photo by permission of
 Mr. Arthur Probsthain]*



MOHENJO-DARO

would sit and gossip or gamble ; whilst the thoughtful provision of brick benches about the numerous public wells suggests that women used the well-heads for the same purpose, just as they do now.

So far as the mechanical arts and crafts go, the ancient Indians would appear to have been the equals in most—and the superiors in some—respects of their contemporaries in el-'Irâq. Pottery models show that they possessed wheeled vehicles, and it is possible that they also used the large irrigation-wheel with clay vessels fixed on its rim for raising water. Pottery was thrown on the wheel ; but the few stone vessels discovered do not bear comparison with those produced in el-'Irâq as early as the Uruk Period. So far as textiles go, Dr. Mackay¹ is convinced that cotton fabrics were woven. If this is correct, then the ancient Indians were the founders of what is one of the world's major industries to-day. Cotton was not introduced into the nearer East until the reign of Sennacherib, 705-681 B.C.

In metal-working, the Indians had one enormous superiority over the Sumerians. It is frequently stated that bronze objects have been found among Sumerian antiquities. This is untrue. All the early cuprous objects from Sumer which have been examined by metallurgists have been found to consist of unalloyed copper containing only natural impurities. The ancient Indians, however, had discovered the secret of alloying their copper with tin and so producing the stronger metal, *bronze*. Vessels both of cast and beaten bronze and (as we have seen) molten bronze statuettes were produced. So far as the present writer is aware, the technique of producing large figures by hammering sheet-metal over a wood-and-bitumen core, common in el-'Irâq, was not known. The commonest tools were adzes or axes of bronze or pure copper. The fine socketed tools and weapons of Sumer, familiar to us from the 'Royal Tombs' at Ur, do not appear in India. One splendid bronze tool, a combined axe and pick, which has a socket, is looked on by Dr. Mackay as a foreign import. Swords and daggers

¹ *The Indus Civilisation*, Ch. IV : this book is a popular account of the work done at Mohenjo-Daro and may be cordially recommended to students.

are rare, for these ancient Indians would seem to have been an unwarlike folk. Some very flimsy bronze spearheads, which would surely buckle if a blow were struck with them, are in such contrast with the high standard of the other metal-work that they have been thought to be trophies captured from a less civilized race. The fact that they are of bronze argues against this. The present writer holds that they were equivalent to the deadly Roman *pilum* or throwing-javelin which was deliberately made so that its head would crumple in inflicting a wound and it could not be picked up and re-used by the enemy. In general, though superior to them in possessing the secret of bronze, the Indian metal-workers do not appear to have been the equals of the Sumerian ones. Nothing at Mohenjo-Daro rivals the beauty and delicacy of the gold and copper objects from Ur.

Before we conclude our survey of the culture of Mohenjo-Daro, a word must be said concerning the art of writing as practised there. As we have seen, the ancient Indian script was highly developed and indicates that the scribe was as busily employed in India as in Babylonia. Books, letters, inventories and the like must have been common. Yet aside from a few scratches on metal and pottery objects, and the seals and little copper tablets already spoken of, no inscriptions at all have come to light. This lack can only be explained on the assumption that the ordinary writing-medium was perishable and that a whole wealth of documents has been for ever lost. Wooden tablets are a possibility, but it is worth noting that the common writing-material of early historical times in India was dried palm-leaves. In any event, even should the Indus script finally surrender to the assaults of modern decipherers, we cannot hope that its unravelling will prove, as did that of cuneiform, to be the key to a storehouse of new knowledge, for it seems all too certain that the whole of what must have been a notable literature has crumbled irrevocably into the dust.

The study of the ancient culture of India, then, will continue to be an exercise in 'pure archæology'—that is, in the drawing of conclusions from material remains. Such conclusions, however, can be most informative. Simply by looking at

CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

their houses, their pottery, metal-work and sculpture, we can see enormous differences between the ancient Indians and the Sumerians or Egyptians. The impression these relics give us is of a practical-minded, ingenious but strongly conservative people of simple, almost austere tastes. They were obviously much less interested in wars and conquests than their 'Irâqi contemporaries, and the absence from their cities of great inscribed monuments and votive images suggests that their rulers—whoever they may have been—were less vainglorious, less convinced of their own supreme importance in the scheme of things, than an Entemena or a Sargon. Probably, life in ancient India had a rather democratic flavour. There seems, at least, to have been no very glaring contrast between the status of the different classes. The severe simplicity of their architecture and the rarity of their works of art—combined with the vivid beauty of some of the latter—give one the impression of a more sophisticated culture than that of Sumer : one might almost say, of a more modern type of mind.

3. *Cultural Connections*

Mohenjo-Daro and Harappâ, lying as they do about 400 miles apart, are only the best-known and most fully investigated of the many ancient cities of Sindh and the Panjâb. Chanhudaro, something over 100 miles south-east of Mohenjo-Daro, and Amri, about the same distance due south, are important sites. But in the far north, at Rupar in the Simla district, typical 'Indus' remains have come to light, and this reminds us of the legend that the mysterious Dâsas possessed summer retreats in the hill-country, Simla being the hot-weather seat of the Indian Government to-day. Further, it seems as though Hyderabad, about 60 miles or so north-east of Karâchi, had been founded in ancient times, whilst the discovery of remains at Vijnot, Alor, Jhukar, Kasri, Gujo and other sites in the Indus Valley and the plains north of it shows that the civilization spread over the whole of Sindh and the Panjâb. How much farther it may have penetrated, we cannot yet say. Sir John Marshall is of opinion that it reached eastward as far as the Gulf of Cambay on the coast, and may have

THE CITIES OF THE INDUS

penetrated the Ganges basin inland. It thus covered a wider area than the civilization of Babylonia.

The question of the spread of this culture outside the boundaries of India is entangled with another question—that of its origins and affinities with the cultures of Sumer and Elam. Neither is at present capable of full solution. What little we are able to say about the matter is derived—as so much in oriental archæology is derived—from a study of the pottery. As previously mentioned, the Indus Valley pottery consists chiefly of very fine wheel-made wares. Five types of pottery, four of which certainly, and all of which probably, are contemporary with one another, may be noticed. They are : (1) plain ware, (2) black-painted ware, (3) black-slip ware, (4) reserved-slip ware, (5) polychrome ware. The *plain* ware need not detain us. It is usually of red, more rarely of buff or grey, clay with or without a fine red or grey ‘slip’. It includes a series of very queer vessels ornamented with rows of knobs. The imported Indian vases found at Eshnunna in Akkad, and previously referred to, are of this class. The *black-painted* vases all have a fine coating of red slip on which geometric and animal designs are executed in glossy black paint. Some of the former certainly recall the lovely decoration of the Highland Culture pottery of Persia and el-‘Irâq, described in Chapter I. Others, however, such as the very favourite design of intersecting circles covering the whole body of the vase, are quite different.

The *black-slip* ware is rather puzzling. The vessels are of grey clay coated with a thick polished black slip which rather recalls the black pottery of Northern origin made in Sumer during the Uruk Period. The same is true of the ‘*reserved-slip*’ ware. This is the technical name given to vases showing an odd type of decoration—a light slip laid over the dark body-clay and then wiped off again in streaks, so as to produce a pattern of alternate dark and light bands. This very curious technique can hardly, one would have thought, have arisen independently in two parts of the world. Yet it is found not only in Sumer during the Uruk Period but also in the lower levels at Carchemish, far up the Euphrates. Since the Uruk Period probably *ended* in Sumer not very much less than 1,000

CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

years before the *beginning* of the Early Period at Mohenjo-Daro, these two types of ware raise problems to which, at present, the wise man will not attempt to pose an answer.

The *polychrome* pottery is rare, and chiefly consists of small vases decorated with geometric patterns in red, black and green, more rarely white and yellow. A very similar fabric was discovered by Mr. Hargreaves at Nâl in the Khanate of Kelât, Western Baluchistan. Here, the vases had conventional pictures of animals outlined in brownish-black and filled in either with plain dark red or a combination of red with white, yellow, green or blue. More significant still, an allied ware similar to this was found by Mr. N. G. Majumdar at Amri, which lies between the Indus and the frontier of Baluchistan, at a *lower*—that is, an *older*—level than the typical black-painted Indian pottery also found there. Now the various styles of ancient vase-painting revealed in Baluchistan—that barren strip of hills and plains which lies along the northern shore of the Persian Gulf—by the excavations of Mr. Hargreaves and Sir Aurel Stein are very confusing. As we saw in Chapter II, people of the Highland Culture of Persia settled at Shahi-Tump in Western Baluchistan, probably as late as about 2500 B.C. Elsewhere in this little-explored region, a variety of painted pots, some resembling Indian and others Highland types, and some apparently a mixture of the two, have come to light. It would be reasonable to suppose—seeing that Baluchistan forms a bridge between Persia and India—that the two great prehistoric civilizations met and mingled here. Indeed, actual imported vases which must have been made in the Indus Valley have been found both in Baluchistan and Waziristan. The eminent authority on prehistoric culture, Prof. Gordon Childe, however, thinks that the Baluchi wares are a proof of the common origin of the two cultures. ‘All these wares,’ he writes, ‘seem to me merely barbarized or undeveloped variants on the tradition which culminated in the Indus style.’¹

By this theory, the polychrome pottery found at Amri would presumably represent an older stage in the civilization of a race who entered India by way of Baluchistan (leaving

¹ cf. *Ancient Egypt*, March-June, 1933.

THE CITIES OF THE INDUS

stragglers behind them, who later produced the various types of pottery found in that country) and finally evolved the high culture of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappâ. The fine polychrome pottery found at Nâl seems to him to have developed from the pottery of the Highlands and to be quite distinct from that of the Indus Valley. In that case, we may suppose that people from the West were filtering across Baluchistan at a time when the Indus culture was already established, and that they founded the town of Amri, just inside the Indian border, but were later evicted from it by the native Indians. This would explain the fact that the polychrome pottery (presumably imported) which is found at Mohenjo-Daro belongs to the Late Period there. The whole problem is one of the knottiest in archæology, and he would be a bold man who offered any dogmatic settlement of it to-day.

Leaving a subject which is perhaps tedious for the general reader, though too important to go without notice, we may now discuss the question of the influence wielded by the civilization of India upon that of Sumer. As we have seen, there is a mass of evidence that a flourishing trade—more probably overland, by way of Baluchistan, than oversea—existed between the two countries during the period of about 3000–2000 B.C. This evidence, it must be confessed, comes rather from el-'Irâq than from India. Few or no definitely Sumerian objects have been found at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappâ. A green steatite vase with a distinctive pattern is almost the only object that can be said with certainty to have reached India from the West. On the other hand, the amazonite beads found in the lowest level at Ur and referred to in Chapter II show that Indian products were coming—though no doubt only indirectly—into Sumer at a period far anterior to that of which we are now speaking.

More significant are certain characteristics of the notorious treasure found in the 'Royal Tombs' at Ur. As we saw in Chapter III these golden graves with their human sacrifices and precious offerings cannot be later than the I Dyn. of Ur and may well be slightly earlier. Among the exquisite little figures of animals found in the tombs was one of a squatting monkey precisely similar to figures in glazed frit unearthed at

Mohenjo-Daro. Since the monkey is, and has always been, unknown in el-'Irâq, we are certainly right in attributing this ornament to Indian influence. Some etched carnelian beads from the same tombs may well be actual imports from Sindh or the Panjâb, where this peculiar technique was carried to a high level of perfection. Finally, we may mention the curious style of hairdressing—the long hair wrapped round the head and gathered into a chignon behind—which is represented by the famous helmet of Meskalamdug and by certain Indian statues. Since the latter are apparently later in date than the 'Royal Tombs', we might suppose that the Indians had imitated the fashion from the Sumerians, were it not for the evidence of the Eshnunna statues¹ which are slightly older than the Ur graves and show an entirely different coiffure, and for the fact that there was a definite influx of Indian merchandise and ideas—as is proved by the figure of a monkey and the beads—into el-'Irâq at this time.

This conclusion is not without importance. As we have seen, a few stray objects found in one country and belonging to another may have a long history of exchange behind them and have passed through many hands to reach their destination: but an actual fashion of toilet imitated by one people from another can only mean one thing. Indians must have visited Sumer and Sumerians India or—perhaps more probably—merchants from the two countries must have met and chaffered somewhere in Persia or Baluchistan, for this exchange of ideas to have come about. From a monkey, a few beads and a bun of hair we really do seem justified in drawing two major conclusions: that the Indus civilization existed, in substantially the form in which we find it at Mohenjo-Daro, at the time when the royal or priestly graves at Ur were being filled with gold and dead men's bones; and that the Sumerians first came into close contact with it at that time. Archæologists have exclaimed loudly at the wonderful and sudden flowering of material culture, the forward and upward impulse in all the arts and crafts, to which the 'Royal Tombs' bear witness. The problem of those tombs is still to be solved: but it is not inadmissible to speculate on whether something

¹ cf. Ch. III.

THE CITIES OF THE INDUS

of the impetus which Sumerian culture undoubtedly received when they were dug may not have been due to contact with a more sophisticated culture, whose home was the valley of the Indus and the broad plain of the Five Rivers.¹

4. *Āryans and Pre-Āryans*

One more aspect of the oldest ² civilization of India remains to be considered. The gap of darkness between the day when Mohenjo-Daro, Chanhudaro, Harappâ, Amri, Alor and a dozen others were cities as Kish or Memphis, and the cloudy age when the Āryan incomers slowly emerge from legend toward history, is as tantalizing as any break in human knowledge. One would dearly like to know whether the Dâsus of Sanskrit legend—those evil-minded, ‘non-sacrificing, hostile-talking’ enchanters—wore carved seals round their necks and dressed their hair in chignons, and were in fact of the same race as the men who made the glorious statues of Harappâ and built the lordly baths and mansions of Mohenjo-Daro; and if they were, how much of their far higher culture they bequeathed, before they were quite stamped out of life, to their barbarian conquerors.

It must be recognized that the picture of the Dâsus—a greedy, cunning, malicious race, inhabiting cities of fabulous wealth, possessing magical powers, yet unable to hold the field against their Āryan enemies—accords perfectly with the idea which we have formed of the people of Mohenjo-Daro, who were certainly a nation of traders, gifted and ingenious beyond common measure, rich in all that the known world could supply, incomparably more civilized than the early Āryans, but definitely unwarlike. To pursue the analogy further would be the task of one who is both a Sanskrit scholar and an expert in the prehistory of the Indus Valley. The present writer is far from being either and will accordingly

¹ It is very significant that the time of the second great flowering of Babylonian art—the Dyn. of Agade—was also an age of close trade-relationship between el-‘Irâq and India.

² The adjective must be taken with reserve. Future excavation may easily show that the ‘Indus Valley Culture’ is no more the oldest culture of India than is the Sumerian of el-‘Irâq.

ÂRYANS AND PRE-ÂRYANS

content himself by restating, in terms suitable to the present handbook, a few points most ingeniously and convincingly made by Sir John Marshall.

The theory propounded by certain scholars that the early civilization of Sindh and the Panjâb was, in fact, an Âryan civilization and shows the Âryans to have been settled in India 1,000 years and more before there is any good cause for us to think they were, may be shortly dealt with. Sir John Marshall points out ¹ that the Âryans, as they appear to us in their own oldest records—the collection of hymns called the *Vedas*—were a people who rode horses (the horse is the typical domestic animal of the various Indogermanic-speaking races), who worked iron, who possessed defensive armour, to whom the cow was the holiest of creatures (its cult survives in India to this day) and the domestic hearth the holiest of places. The ancient people of the Indus, on the contrary, were ignorant of the horse, of worked iron and of armour, worshipped bulls but not cows, and had no true hearths in their homes. There is also a plenitude of evidence that they ate fish and worshipped idols, whilst the primitive Âryans abhorred the former and despised the latter. No more conclusive arguments could be desired. Whoever they were, the citizens of Mohenjo-Daro were not Âryans.

But that they contributed much to the sum of Indian civilization which is alive and vital to this day is certain. Since the ancient Âryan was an iconoclast and the modern Hindu an idolater—the word is not used with any offensive intention—it is fair to assume that the custom of image-worship was taught the invaders by the older and more civilized inhabitants. One of the prominent features of modern and medieval Hinduism is the cult of *Shîva*, the third person of the Hindu Trinity, who symbolizes the Destructive Principle in Nature, in contrast to Brâm, the Creator, and Vishnu the Preserver of the Universe. Many ugly legends are told about this god. He haunts the burning-*ghâts* and is depicted as dancing upon a prostrate corpse. The cobra and the tiger are his friends. On one occasion, one of his wives, in sport, crept up behind him and clapped her delicate hands over his eyes. Instantly,

¹ *Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Valley Civilisation*, Vol. I.

a third eye blazed forth upon the forehead of the god, and so frightful was its glare that the whole universe was reduced to ashes. His principal wife, who goes under a score of names, is even more terrifying than he. As *Kālī*, she rides on a tiger and wears a garland of men's skulls. As *Stīlā*, she brings the smallpox. She was the patroness of the Thugs until that society was stamped out by the English. Some idea of her attributes may be obtained from a view of the many horrifying images of her in the British Museum. The bloody and ghastly characteristics of both these deities distinguish them sharply from the gods of the old Āryan pantheon—Indra Vâruna, Āgni, Sûryâ and the rest—who strongly resembled the Greek Olympians in their mixture of goodwill and indifference toward mankind. It has, accordingly, long been believed that Shîva and his wife represent an older stratum of belief than most of the other high gods of modern Hinduism.

The excavations at Mohenjo-Daro appear to support this theory. Shîva is usually represented to-day with four arms and three or more faces. Statues and pictures commonly show him in the act of dancing. Now the famous dancing statuette of a man from Harappâ had the head or heads (now missing) applied separately to the neck, and there is no doubt at all that it possessed, not one head, but three. Further, certain seals from Mohenjo-Daro show a man with three faces and a deer's antlers, squatting in just the way that modern Hindu gods squat and surrounded by beasts. Shîva is the patron of wild animals. It does not seem too speculative to identify this important god with the three-headed deity of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappâ, and his consort with the goddess of whom so many clay figures have been recovered there. If this identification be correct—as the present writer strongly feels it must be—then Shîva disputes with Dumuzi (who is still worshipped in el-'Irâq) the claim to be the oldest living god, for whilst the oracles of Enlil and Osiris are for ever dumb, millions still worship him under his many names.

The question of whether cremation—the orthodox way of disposing of a corpse, according to modern Hinduism—is a heritage from the pre-Āryan culture is less easily answered. There seems to be some evidence that the ancient Indians

ÂRYANS AND PRE-ÂRYANS

burned their dead, but since at least some of the different Indo-germanic-speaking nations did the like, we cannot fairly say from which source the modern usage of the Hindu derives. One other factor in Hinduism may perhaps have a pre-Âryan origin. Everyone has noticed the curiously heavy-lidded slant of the eyes—almost a downward squint—which is peculiar to Hindu and Buddhist sacred statuary. Almost everyone, too, has heard the word *yoga*, even though with but a vague idea of what it means. Roughly speaking, *yoga* is an elaborate discipline of both mind and body which is believed—and apparently not without reason—by the Hindus to confer abnormal mental and physical powers on those who practise it. The peculiar squatting posture and down-turned eyes of modern Hindu gods are both outward and visible signs of the practice of *yoga*, which consists very largely in a system of bodily exercises. Now we have already seen that the ancient god on the seals squats in this way : and a bearded statuette from Mohenjo-Daro, previously mentioned, shows the typical narrowing and fixing of the eyes. Since the image wears an elaborate robe and fillet, it must represent an important person or even a god. We may add that Shîva, whose worship we believe to go back to pre-Âryan times, is the patron deity of *yoga* at the present day : so that there really seems to be a case for supposing that this very important and peculiar feature of the great Hindu religion is a legacy from the old culture of the Indus. If the Dâsus practised this mysterious discipline, we can see some reason, too, for the charge of sorcery brought against them by the Âryans.

That the culture of the Indus Valley had already been weakened by barbarian inroads at the time of the Âryan conquest seems probable enough. The Late Period at Mohenjo-Daro, for example, was one of decline ; and toward its end there is unmistakable evidence that a great catastrophe overtook the city. In several places, in streets and chambers, grisly discoveries have been made. Human skeletons,¹ whose limbs,

¹ An examination of these yields valuable data as to the extremely mixed population of the city. Four races (technically called the Proto-Australoid, Mediterranean, Alpine and Alpino-Mongoloid) have been distinguished.

THE CITIES OF THE INDUS

still twisted in attitudes of despair and pain, no hand had ever composed for burial, were found lying as they had fallen at the moment of death. One group had perished on the steps of a sunken well-chamber in which, apparently, they had sought vainly to find refuge. Another of no less than fourteen persons lay huddled together in a room.¹ The destruction which came suddenly on these unfortunates was not the final destruction of the Indus culture, but it may well have contributed to the latter. The fact that two of the skeletons are headless suggests that it was by invasion rather than plague that the great city passed finally from splendour to desertion, surrendering its buildings as lairs and the flesh of its proud citizens as food to the jackal and the hyena, and earning the grim native name by which we know it—Mohenjo-Daro, 'the Place of the Dead'.

¹ See plate facing p. 154.

CHAPTER V

THE SUMERIAN RENAISSANCE

1. *Gudea of Lagash*

We left the lands of Sumer and Akkad at the time in the XXV cent. B.C. when the Empire of Sargon and Narâm-Sin of Agade had crumbled finally to pieces and the two countries themselves had bowed their necks under the barbarian yoke of Gutium. It was, as we know, far from the first time that strangers had violently intruded themselves into el-'Irâq, nor need we expect to find evidence of any really calamitous break in Sumerian culture. The headquarters of the invaders were in the far north—probably at *Arrapha*, the modern Kirkûk in the Assyrian plain—and they cannot have settled much in Sumer proper. The King-list indeed interposes a 'IV Dyn. of Uruk' of five kings reigning 30 years, between the extinction of the house of Sargon and the rise of the Dyn. of Gutium. The latter is said to have lasted 125 years and 40 days, but the reigns actually given only add up to 86, so that there must have been earlier Gutian kings ruling contemporarily with the Dyn. of Uruk. Two kings of the latter dynasty, Urnigin and Urgigir, are mentioned in an unpublished inscription found at Ur, which evidently was again under the control of Uruk at this period. Probably the ephemeral last kings of the Dyn. of Agade reigned likewise at this time.

The Gutî were not precisely prodigal in the erection of monuments. Their first king, says Nur-Ninsubur, *had no name*, and certainly could not have written it if he had had one. The twenty names which have been preserved are, with exceptions that will be considered in a moment, foreign and jawbreaking. Being more in contact with the Semitic Akkadians of the north than with the Sumerians, it was from the former that the Gutî received the little that they ever did receive of Babylonian

THE SUMERIAN RENAISSANCE

culture. One of them, less hopelessly illiterate than his predecessors, has even left us a battered Akkadian inscription to remember him by : *Lasirab the Mighty, King of Gutium . . . made and dedicated this. Whoso changes this inscription, writes thereon the mention of his name, may the gods of Gutium, and Ishtar and Sin rend his loins and may they take away his seed . . .* With these charitable expressions, Lasirab the mighty disappears into obscurity again. His name is not found in the King-list, but the nineteenth name is missing and we may perhaps insert him there. If so, he was the successor of Iarlagan or Iarlaganda of whom we have also a contemporary memorial in the inscription of Nammahni, *isag* of Umma, who restored the temple of the goddess Ninurra *at that time when Iarlagan was king of Gutium.* These few facts propose an important speculation. In the list of this dynasty we have first of all ten kings with thoroughly foreign names. They are followed by seven others, all of whom possibly and most of whom probably are Semitic Akkadians. Either, then, a family of Akkadians actually contrived to get themselves elected as rulers by the barbarians, or else the barbarians themselves grew so imbued with the culture of their new subjects that they adopted Akkadian names, much as a Gothic ' Dietrich ' blossomed forth into a Latin ' Theodoricus '. During the reigns of all these, life in Sumer and Akkad went on peacefully enough, as we shall see. Then comes Iarlagan, with a pure Gutian name, sufficiently powerful in the south for a ruler of Umma to date events by him. His second successor, the last Gutian king, was Tirigân who, as we shall see, tried to reduce Sumer to abjection. Surely, what has happened was a revival of crude ' nationalism ', a reaction against the friendly terms on which they had come to live with their civilized subjects, on the part of the Gutî, who now begin to oppress and plunder their victims as at first. King Log is succeeded by King Stork.

Before we see the last act of this play—the ejection of the Gutî neck and crop from el-'Îrâq—there is a vast information concerning the culture of Sumer during the earlier generations of their rule. Improbable though it may seem, this was almost the most brilliant and productive epoch of Sumerian history, a time when art and literature flourished as never before and

when commerce was as widespread as in the grand days of Sargon.

Our evidence for this comes from the ever-productive ruins of Lagash. Here, probably about the end of the IV Dyn. of Uruk, there reigned a powerful *isag* named Ur-Bau son of Nina-gal.¹ Discoveries at Ur shows that this city was likewise under his authority and that of his successors. Ur-Bau has left several inscriptions commemorating repairs done to E-Ninnû, the great temple of Ningirsu at Lagash, as well as to the shrines of other deities. More interesting to us, he had a statuette (now unfortunately headless) carved in diorite and dedicated to Ningirsu. It is squat and clumsy, but still superior to any older statues save the best archaic ones from Eshnunna ; and it gives promise of more delicate work to come. Ur-Bau was succeeded by two of his sons-in-law, Ugar and Nammahni. Of the latter and his wife Ninganda, we have several inscriptions, including a female statuette with a rather touching dedication to the goddess Bau for the long life of Nammahni by *Ninkagina, the mother that bore him . . . I have set this statue near the ear of my lady (i.e. Bau) May it speak my prayer to her !* The statues, standing in the attitude of prayer, which were so often placed in the temples, were, in fact, meant to act as proxies for the worshippers who dedicated them and to make perpetual intercession with the god on their behalf.

Ur-Ninsun, Darku, Lu-Bau and Lu-Gula, the next four rulers of Lagash, are unimportant. Indeed, if they had left us a whole museum full of monuments, their fame would still be eclipsed by that of the most celebrated and remarkable of all the princes of Lagash or Sumer—*Gudea*. This extraordinary man, who is more of a living figure to us to-day than all the mighty kings of Uruk or Kish, was apparently not of the blood royal, for in none of his numerous inscriptions (more than sixty of them are known to us) do we find mention of his fathers. Probably, he began life in the honourable profession of a scribe—a profession to which he afterward apprenticed one of his sons, Lugalitigin—and rose by his own energy and abilities to a throne that might, under circumstances less politically restricted, have been still more exalted than it was. The wars

¹ Or Nanshe-gal.

of conquest upon which most of the great rulers of Sumer expended their own and their people's energy were forbidden him by the fact of the Gutian domination—a domination which he appears neither to have disputed nor admitted. One war he did wage, and that successfully, for on one of his many inscribed statues we read : *He smote the city of Anshan in Elam with the sword. He brought its spoils to E-Ninnû for Ningirsu.* This was probably a punitive expedition. Seeing their neighbours helpless at the hands of a tribe of indolent barbarians, the Elamites had doubtless fallen to their age-old game of raiding across the Tigris. Gudea, like his formidable predecessor of old, Eannatum, taught them a lesson, and for the rest of his reign, as we shall see, they were excessively anxious to keep on friendly terms with him.

The great event of Gudea's life was the restoration—for the second time in about a century—of the temple of Ningirsu E-Ninnû. Of this we possess a curious and minute account inscribed on two hollow drums or cylinders of terra-cotta, the famous '*Cylinders of Gudea*' universally regarded as the most important of all Sumerian literary compositions. The Cylinders, which are now in the Louvre, bear 30 and 24 columns of fine cuneiform writing respectively and contain a detailed description of the circumstances leading up to the rebuilding of the temple, the materials employed, the appearance, use and furnishing of the various parts of the new edifice, the ceremonies performed and the estates and goods with which it was endowed, together with prayers and addresses to the gods, the whole giving us an unrivalled picture of the society and religion of Sumer in the XXIV cent. B.C. The poetical style of these compositions is often striking and sometimes actually beautiful, and the whole text is of unique importance for the study of the language.

'Cylinder A' explains Gudea's reasons for deciding to rebuild E-Ninnû. A drouth had fallen on the land, which was of course taken to signify dissatisfaction on the part of the gods. Soon afterward, the *isag* dreamed a mysterious dream. *There was a man. His size was like to heaven, his size was like to earth. By his head-ornament, he was a god. Imdugud was at his side, a storm was at his feet, to his right and his left a lion was lying. He bade me*

build his house—I knew not his meaning ! The sun rose upon me over the horizon, and there was a woman—who was she not, who was she ? She carried her head erect (?), she had a glittering stylus in her hand, she composed therewith a table of propitious stars and pondered upon it. There was a second one. He was a warrior. He held a tablet of lapis-lazuli in his hand and drew thereon the plan of a temple. Before me stood a clean head-pad (for carrying loads on the head) and a clean brick-mould was made ready . . .

The following morning, Gudea sacrificed to the prophetic goddesses Bau and Nina, and the latter interpreted (no doubt through her priests) the dream which had so puzzled him. The divinity with the lions was Ningirsu himself, accompanied, as ever, by his faithful lion-headed bird. The rising sun was Ningishzida and the man and woman were Nindubba and Nidaba. All these deities had combined to order him to restore E-Ninnû. The *isag* at once cleared the temple of rubbish (such as collects in any public building in the East) and sacrificed ; but like David when he wished to build the house of the Lord, he could go no further until the god's pleasure had been finally expressed. Unlike David, though, he received an encouraging oracle. *Thou who wilt build for me, thou who wilt build for me, Gudea, isag who will build my house for me, surely I will grant thee the omen for building.* The temple should be built and the drouth would end, and then *one man shall carry out his contract with another*—a reference to the many Sumerian business-agreements which were made contingent upon an expected harvest. A ritual cleansing of the whole city was at once begun and was accompanied by a kind of Saturnalia—no punishments were inflicted, no complaints made, children were not scolded nor servants clouted over the head, bonfires of sweet wood were lighted and prayers went up by day and night.

The *isag* himself laid the first brick and the work, subsidized by special taxes, went forward merrily. Elamites and Susians, remembering the sack of Anshan, came forward obsequiously with gifts. Timber and porphyry were obtained from the Arabian coast of the Persian Gulf, copper from Kimash in Elâm and cedar-trunks and gold-dust actually from as far afield as Northern Syria and Cilicia respectively. These wide trade-

connections show how little the Gutî interfered with the normal activities of life in el-'Irâq—though we may be sure they levied imposts on the rich caravans returning to Lagash from the north. The stones used for the decoration of the temple proper took a year to collect, another year to work and seven days to get into place. Most of them were used for the famous statues, of which more anon. In the course of his restorations, Gudea came across an ancient stela of Lugalkisalsi of the II Dyn. of Uruk¹ and piously re-erected it. Lions, bulls and dragons (doubtless of copper laid over bitumen, such as were found at el-'Ubeid) guarded the gates, and the gates themselves were overlaid with metal. The effect must have been very splendid, but Gudea's own statement that the glitter could be seen as far away as Kish—a matter of 115 miles as the crow flies—is an exaggeration.

'Cylinder B' tells of the rites and sacrifices performed when the new E-Ninnû was finished. The temple was endowed with fresh estates and the various lesser gods attendant on Ningirsu—the court of the heavenly king, parallel with that of the earthly one—were inducted: Lugalkurdub, his general, Shakansig-gabar, his proctor, Essignun, his master of horse, Dimgalabzu, his gamekeeper, and so on. Then the god's holy emblems, his chariot and mace, were installed. *In his chariot adorned with glorious lapis-lazuli, that king, the warrior Ningirsu, took his place like the sun.* The week when the god actually entered his new residence was kept as a second Saturnalia. *Until the seventh day, the maid was equal with her mistress, the master was wont to walk beside his slave.* The text ends with a very fine prayer (unfortunately mutilated) of Gudea, two lines of which are eloquent of the uncertain age in which he lived: *Let the land rest in peace, and let the countries lift up their eyes toward Sumer!*

The modern reader may be inclined to shake his head over this enormous expenditure of treasure, time and energy upon the erection of a palace to shelter a dumb idol. What was Gudea about, he may ask, to go taxing his subjects for that, when he might have been digging canals or levying regiments to fight the Gutî? But this is a false criticism. In re-endowing and enlarging E-Ninnû, Gudea was performing the

¹ See Ch. III.

greatest possible service to his realm ; for the Sumerian temple, it must always be remembered, was the very centre of the city's economic, social and intellectual life, a great public institution for which there is no precise parallel in modern society : a university, hospital, observatory, public record-office, state bank, poor-relief institute, lawcourt, manufactory, safe-deposit, public trustee, museum, art-gallery, theatre and town-hall combined. It was the focus of all public life. In its gate the magistrates sat to hear pleas. In its strong-rooms the public treasure was laid up. Its resident priests were doctors, astronomers and soothsayers. It employed whole armies of workmen on its estates and in its weaving-sheds, tanneries and foundries ; engaged in trade on its own account ; advanced loans to private persons ; trained skilled craftsmen, artists and musicians ; taught the children to read, write and reverence the gods ; edited the ancient classics and compiled treatises on science and medicine and historical chronicles. Its gorgeous processions and elaborate mystery-plays were probably the only public entertainments of the day. Its pleasant courts and groves, like those of the mosques and mederses of Islam, were doubtless open at all times to the passer-by. On the other hand, we must not imagine that the Sumerians were a 'priest-ridden' people. There was no distinction between Church and State, for the king or *isag* was himself the high-priest, and the temple belonged to the city and the city to the temple, just as the god belonged to the city and the city to the god.

Gudea's 'building-lust', as the Germans would call it, did not stop short with E-Ninnû. His many inscriptions tell us of the building or rebuilding of five other temples in Girsu, the sacred quarter of Lagash. In another quarter, Urukugga, he built temples to Bau and Gatumdug, two of the innumerable Lagashite mother-goddesses, whilst Nina, the goddess who had interpreted his dream for him, was rewarded with a splendid shrine, *towering over the countries*.

Mention has already been made of his statues, which are of supreme interest for the study of Sumerian art. Twelve of them were found by de Sarzec and are now in the Louvre, and others have turned up since. One of them ('Statue D') is the

largest piece of sculpture ever found in Sumer—a colossal seated image, now headless but still over six feet high. It is of green diorite from Magan and originally stood in E-Ninnû. The French archæologist, Léon Heuzey, writes of it : ‘ It is the master-work of the collection . . . More mutilated than the rest, it seizes the imagination by the grandeur and simplicity of its aspect, the solidity and majesty of its pose. The broadly-modelled shoulders, the breast breathing beneath the robe, would not ill besee a Greek Jupiter of the old style.’ From the same temple come two smaller seated statues, also headless, which show the *isag* as an architect with a drawing-board, stylus and curiously modern-looking ruler in his lap. On the drawing-board of ‘ Statue B ’ is traced the actual plan of E-Ninnû, as revealed to Gudea by Nindubba—a large enclosure in the shape of an L with a shortened foot, its buttressed walls pierced by six ornamental gateways. This plan is of the greater interest because the temple is so ruined that little can now be learned from its remains. The skirt of the statue bears a very long inscription of nine columns which is a sort of condensation of the text of ‘ Cylinder A ’ and contains these interesting lines : *In that temple, I did away with hostility ; gave heed to the ordinances of Nina and Ningirsu ; gave not up the orphan to him that owned goods, nor the widow to him that had power. In the house that had no son, the daughter entered upon the heritage.*

Another noteworthy statue is ‘ Statue A ’, of green diorite, some three and a half feet high. It shows Gudea standing with his hands folded before his breast in the conventional attitude of prayer. The modelling of the arms and torso, and the high polish of the stone, are very fine. It was dedicated to *Ninharsag, the lady who shines upon the city, mother of all little ones.* All the statues wear the new Akkadian garment which had replaced the sheepskin kilt and plaid of the Sumerians—a simple toga of one piece, with an embroidered hem, passing over the left arm and under the right one, the loose end being tucked in over the right breast.

The few heads of statues that have survived—especially that of a standing statue of dolerite discovered recently and a separate head which should belong to ‘ Statue G ’—are obvious



STATUE OF GUDEA (IN THE LOUVRE, PARIS).

W. L. Maxwell photo.



A SCULPTURED BOWL FROM UR.
Period. III Dynasty.

portraits. They show us a pleasant-looking clean-shaven man in early middle age, wearing a grave and attentive expression, such as the pious *isag* must have worn, in fact, when he listened to the oracles which set him to his great task. The whole face and head indicate unusual, perhaps very unusual, intellectual capacity. The other important sculpture of the reign is a fragmentary limestone stela, now in Berlin, carved in bas-relief with figures of Ningishzida and other gods bringing Gudea into the presence of Ningirsu. Technically, the work is good, but the figures are rather squat and crowded and one looks in vain for the vigorous movement and perfect proportioning of the Narâm-Sin stela. There is also an exceedingly fine vase in dark green steatite, carved with dragons and serpents, which he dedicated to Ningishzida and which is now in the Louvre. A more personal relic, also in Paris, is his private seal, most beautifully engraved with a scene similar to that on the Berlin stela. One is interested to see in the hands of the figure of Ningirsu, and beneath his throne, vases with streams of water spouting from them—a symbol of Gudea's reason for rebuilding *...Ninnû*.

Gudea's sculptures have been dwelt on at this length because they represent a high-watermark of Sumerian art, are infinitely superior to anything the Sumerians themselves had produced before, and almost if not quite equal to the best work of the Sargonid Akkadians. The treatment of the muscles in the best of his statues, and that of the heads which have survived, show a wonderful power of observation and an almost perfect mastery of the material. The pose of the standing statues is natural, dignified and impressive. The faults of the work are a certain dumpiness of figure and, in the poorer statues, a disregard of proportion; but this may be due to the size of the specially imported blocks on which the sculptors worked. In any event, this sudden and brilliant efflorescence of art in a time of political abjection is sufficiently astonishing. We may probably trace it to three causes. The first is certainly the influence of the Akkadians who, as we have seen, possessed real artistic genius. The second, paradoxically, is the destruction of the Akkadian empire and the consequent stoppage of the steady drain of men—artists and craftsmen for the king's

works, able-bodied fellows for the king's wars—from the provincial cities to the capital. The third, certainly, was the political domination of the Gutî which made wars of aggrandizement impossible and left leisure for the arts of peace. We have already seen that, during part of their time at least, the Gutî appear to have been benevolent rulers enough, at any rate in a negative way ; and the glories of Lagash under Gudea are a strong further proof of this.

Gudea was succeeded by his son, Ur-Ningirsu, of whom the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen possesses a fairly good but somewhat rough standing statue and the Berlin Museum a rather damaged bust. His inscriptions are rare and brief, but a most interesting question is raised by them. In addition to those in which he calls himself *isag of Lagash, son of Gudea, the isag of Lagash who built E-Ninnû*, we have also inscriptions of a certain Ur-Ningirsu who was priest of An, Enki and Nina at Lagash in the time of Dungi, the second king of the III Dyn. of Ur, with which we shall be dealing very shortly. The question is—are these two persons the same? If so, then Ur-Ningirsu had been degraded from the office of *isag* to that of priest by Dungi's father, Ur-Nammu, for we know that the *isag* of Lagash during the latter's reign was one Urabba. It seems probable that the two *are* to be identified. In that case, Ur-Ningirsu must have succeeded his father in or about the year 2290 B.C., in the days of the last Gutian kings, and been deposed about 2277, for reasons which will appear later. Gudea himself, then, lived during the latter half of the XXIV cent. B.C.

We have no records of the life of other city-states during the Gutian period.

2. *The Expulsion of the Gutî*

We have to speak, now, of stirring things. Probably about the end of Gudea's reign the kings of Gutium, no longer so well-disposed toward their tributaries as of old, were making their power felt in the South. It is even possible that the sight of one of their nominal vassals building splendid

THE EXPULSION OF THE GUTĪ

temples and sending caravans all over the known earth to bring him the peculiar treasure of kings did something to arouse their jealousy. The crisis came with the accession, probably in 2302 B.C., of the last Gutian king, Tirigān, and the story may be told as far as possible in the words of a triumphal inscription composed very shortly afterward by one Utu-Hegal, king of Uruk.

Gutium, the viper of the hills, he who was the enemy of the gods, who had taken away with him the kingship of Sumer to the mountain ; had filled Sumer with hostility ; had rapt away with him both husband and wife ; had rapt away with him both parent and child ; had set hostility and wickedness in the land :—Enlil, king of the countries aye, even Enlil, king of the countries, laid a charge upon Utu-Hegal, the mighty man, king of Uruk, king of the Four Quarters, the king in whose words there is no vacillation, to blot out his name !

Evidently, the hateful custom of slave-raiding had been revived by the later kings of Gutium. Utu-Hegal, who at that time was probably *isag* of Uruk, on receiving the command of Enlil at once entered the great temple of Inanna at Uruk and prayed as follows : *My lady, lioness of battle, rampant among the mountains, Enlil has laid it upon me to restore the kingship of Sumer into its own hand. Be thou my help !* A piece of intolerable tyranny on the part of the Gutī is then described : *Tirigān, king of Gutium, had uttered this command : ‘ Nobody shall venture forth.’ He seized the Tigris and the ‘ neck of the sea ’. He cut off the way to the lower part of Sumer ; cut off the road to the upper part. The country paths began to put forth long grass.* In other words, the freedom of communication which, we have seen, was such a blessing to Sumer in the previous generation was destroyed. Tirigān had determined at all costs to reduce the South country to complete vassalage. With a grasp of strategy surprising in a barbarian, he had first occupied the whole plain between the two rivers, probably at a point in the region of Kish, thus cutting Babylonia more or less in half, and then sent a flying column down the Tigris as far as its juncture with the Euphrates. Doubtless his next step would have been to close in upon Sumer from two sides (like Moltke’s famous ‘ pincers ’ at Sedan, but on a huge scale) ; but Utu-Hegal was too quick for him.

THE SUMERIAN RENAISSANCE

He cried to his fellow-citizens : ' Enlil has given Gutium over to me ! My lady Inanna is my help. Dumuzi, the dragon of heaven, has pronounced my destiny ; given me Gilgamesh, son of Ninsun, for a guardian ! ' He caused joy of heart to the people of Uruk, the people of Kullab. His city followed after him as one man. After a five-days' march they reached a shrine belonging to an otherwise unknown Akkadian, one Ili-Tabba, and here Ur-Ninazu and Nabi-Illil, captains of Tirigân, sent back a message in to Sumer. Whatever this message was, it was disregarded. The bold rebel led out an army against Tirigân. Utu-Hegal, the mighty man, overthrew those captains. On that day, Tirigân, king of Gutium, took to his heels alone. He set his hope on Dubrum, his safe place, whither he ran : but the men of Dubrum, because they knew that Utu-Hegal was the king to whom Enlil had given power, did not stretch forth the hand to Tirigân there. The wretched man (according to the King-list, he had reigned only forty days) was handed over, along with his wife and children, to Utu-Hegal who, in true Oriental fashion, set his foot on his neck, and thus restored the kingship of Sumer into its own hand.

So ended the Dynasty of Gutium. It had lasted, according to the various Kinglists, either 86, 90 or 125 years. The longest total is most likely. Indeed, the short reigns of the Gutian kings, even then, demand some explanation. According to Nur-Ninsubur, there were 21 of them, including the nameless founder of the dynasty, and of these the longest-lived enjoyed a reign of only fifteen years. Possibly, like other uncivilized peoples, they were addicted to internecine feuds and many of their rulers lost their lives in battle ; or perhaps—since the King-list seems to hint that they had, when they first came into el-'Irâq, no institution of monarchy—their kings were not kings at all, but simply senior sheykhs or aghas, *primi inter pares*, who were elected and held office for a limited time. In any event, kings or no kings, the treachery of the men of Dubrum made an end of them.

Utu-Hegal naturally took the old Akkadian title of ' King of the Four Quarters ' and claimed the rulership of all Sumer and Akkad. It was no more than his right. Doubtless, he made an excellent king. A fragment of a stela and a marble mace-head, dug up some years ago at Ur, were dedicated *for the life*

THE EMPIRE OF UR

of Utu-Hegal, the mighty man, king of Uruk, king of the Four Regions, by Ur-Nammu,¹ viceroy of Ur. This Ur-Nammu was a native of Uruk whom Utu-Hegal had placed over the second city of the empire, with unhappy consequences. The laconic record of Nur-Ninsubur tells the remainder of the story. *At Uruk Utu-Hegal was king. He ruled seven years, two months, seven days. One king ruled these seven years, two months, seven days. The sword smote Uruk. Its kingship went to Ur. At Ur Ur-Nammu was king.* We have no details of the rebellion, but the ominous precision with which Nur-Ninsubur counts the very days of the liberator of Sumer suggests that he was killed in battle. His short reign constitutes the fifth and last 'Dynasty of Uruk'. After an interval of probably three centuries, Ur was again the capital of the united kingdom.

3. *The Empire of Ur*

However gravely we may suspect Ur-Nammu—and we can only suspect him, for Utu-Hegal may easily have met his death in some quite other way—of being a rebel and traitor to the great patriot who had benefited him, we must admit him to have been one of the ablest monarchs who ever ruled in Sumer. He reigned for 18 years, that is, according to the most likely scheme of chronology, from 2294 to 2276 B.C. That he was a native of Uruk and not of Ur seems to be proved by the devotion shown by him and his family to the especial gods of Uruk, An, Inanna, Ninsun, Gilgamesh and Lugalbanda, who had no place in Ur's own local pantheon. If we are right in believing that Ur-Ningirsu, the priest of Lagash in Dungi's time, is the same as Ur-Ningirsu son of Gudea and that he had been deposed from his post of *isag* by Ur-Nammu, then the latter's reign must have been marked by political upheavals. In the records of Lagash dating from the time of Ur-Ningirsu the *isag*, we find mention of gifts made to a certain 'king' and 'queen' who may well be Utu-Hegal and his wife. If Ur-Ningirsu was a loyal supporter of Utu-Hegal, it is easy to see why he was afterwards demoted.

¹ Read, until recently, *Ur-Engur*.

THE SUMERIAN RENAISSANCE

A fair number of Ur-Nammu's inscriptions were known even before the Joint Expedition began work at Ur, and many more have now been found there. These describe his public works throughout Sumer and Akkad and his offerings to the gods. But a more important achievement of his is recorded in the formula which was used for dating business-documents in one year of his reign : *Year when Ur-Nammu the king made straight his path from below to above.* This is a set phrase for a military expedition starting from the Gulf and going northward, perhaps even across the upper Euphrates and into Syria. We can well imagine that such a campaign was necessary. The long Gutian oppression and the dramatic political changes that followed it had shaken the old empire of Sargon and Narâm-Sin to pieces. Ur-Nammu might call himself 'King of the Four Quarters' and 'King of Sumer and Akkad'—a new title which he had invented and which was to be borne by every subsequent king of Babylonia down to the V cent. B.C.—but he would find few to recognize his authority unless he could enforce it at the point of his sword. Even the city of Kish, it seems, had to be reduced by arms. How far his expedition took him and to what extent he was merely continuing a work begun by Utu-Hegal, we do not know. Certainly he brought all Babylonia to heel. His pious works prove that. He rebuilt the temple and *ziggurat* of Enlil at Nippur, that holy city to which benefactions were made *de rigueur* by every ruler claiming more than local authority. His affection for Uruk—easily explained if we suppose it to have been his native city—was shown by a similar work on the sanctuary of the goddess Inanna there, the venerable E-anna or 'House of Heaven'. The *ziggurat*, which had existed since prehistoric times, had received no attention during recent centuries. Ur-Nammu rebuilt it, apparently in the form of a single tall platform of mud-brick, some 135 ft. square, approached by a triple staircase and surrounded by two vast girdle-walls, each about 33 ft., in thickness and with chambers contrived in them. Beneath the scanty ruins of the outer wall the German excavators discovered a foundation-deposit consisting of a small copper image and a green steatite tablet with this inscription : *For his lady Inanna, lady of E-anna, Ur-Nammu*

THE EMPIRE OF UR

the mighty man, king of Ur, king of Sumer and Akkad, has built and restored her house. In the renovated temple, Ur-Nammu installed his own son as high-priest.

The king also rebuilt the temple of the sun at Larsam in the extreme south of Sumer, but it was naturally Ur itself that basked in the warmest sunshine of his generosity. The old canals—one encircling the city and one running through it to end in a huge walled harbour—were repaired so that ‘ships of Magan’—*i.e.* large seafaring craft from the Persian Gulf—could anchor inside the city. A colossal rampart of mud-brick, above 25 ft. high, with sloping sides and a base varying from about 77 to more than 100 ft. wide, was thrown up around the city, enclosing a circuit of two miles or so, and crowned with a curtain-wall of burnt brick. With a little patching from later kings, this splendid fortification remained in use for some 1,800 years, or a period almost equal to the whole Christian era !

The building for which Ur-Nammu is best remembered by the modern visitor to el-‘Irâq—and it is doubtless the one for which he would most wish to be remembered—is, owing to the accident of its preservation, the huge *ziggurat* of the moon-god Nannar. This was entirely rebuilt in the VI cent. B.C., but Sir Charles Woolley’s investigations have shown that the new building was not greatly different from the old. It was a typical stage-tower, measuring, in Ur-Nammu’s time, something under 200 by 150 ft. and 70 ft. high, and composed of three storeys with a little chapel on top. A treble staircase led up to a gatehouse on the first stage, from the back of which another stair ran higher. At the south-eastern end of the first stage, built up against the face of the second one, was a small chamber in which sacrifices may have been offered. Even in its present state, the sight of this artificial mountain of bricks impresses itself on the imagination. It rises above the dust-heaps of Ur like a guardian giant. By day, the palms and sails of the unfaithful Euphrates, which once laved the city walls but has now betaken itself twelve miles away, are visible from its top ; and at night, when the moon to which it is dedicated stripes its sides with black and grey and the jackals slouch over it, one could believe it to be indeed a

THE SUMERIAN RENAISSANCE

natural hill. It stands on a raised platform more than 30 ft. above the level of the plain, and was once encircled by a chambered wall. Below and before this lay a vast courtyard, 90 yds. long, surrounded by storerooms and entered by a grand gateway on the north-east side.

Ur-Nammu did not live to complete his splendid work, the glory of Ur even to-day ; but enough was achieved for him to erect a memorial, in the shape of a handsome limestone stela about 5 ft. wide, of which a few fragments have been recovered. These are sculptured with scenes of sacrifice and of the king (who wears a long beard) carrying tools for the building of the *ziggurat* and performing other symbolic acts. The sculpture is equal to the best work in bas-relief from Lagash, but shows the same faults. The fragments are now in the University Museum of Pennsylvania.

Ur-Nammu was succeeded in 2276 B.C.—according to the chronological scheme used in this book—by his son *Dungi*, whose name some authorities read *Shulgi*—the most important ruler of the dynasty, during whose reign of 46 years the Sumerian revival reached its crest. Utu-Hegal had headed — and the phrases of his inscription show that he was conscious of heading—a great national movement. The expulsion of the Gutî brought in a new and grander phase of Sumerian culture. The Akkadian Semites, who had never been hated as the Gutî were hated and who, as we have seen, were able to teach the Sumerians as well as to learn from them, had their part in this as much as the Sumerians themselves. They were by this time completely acclimatized in el-'Irâq, and Ur-Nammu had been careful to emphasize the equality of the two nations in his new title ' King of Sumer and Akkad '. Indeed, as we shall presently see, he himself may very well have had Akkadian blood in his veins. The characteristic spirit of the new age was not one of fanatical hatred for the foreigner, but a desire for national solidarity above all else : for a united Babylonian kingdom to take the place of the old simmering hot-pot of petty states lying at the mercy of the first invader. It is one of the great ironies of history that when this ideal was finally realized it involved the complete extinction of the Sumerian race.

THE EMPIRE OF UR

Not very many inscriptions of Dungi have been found at Ur, but a fair number are known from other sources. Moreover, we have the complete date-formulæ for his long reign and these give us information about matters never spoken of in the official inscriptions. The formulæ for the first 13 years record buildings and pious actions and religious festivals. In the very year after his accession, the king set to work on a new temple for the creator-god Ninurta. He was evidently very devoted to this god, for he dedicated his seventeenth year to him, calling it simply *Year of Ninurta*, *great isag of Enlil*. In the sixth year, he finished a building at Ur called the 'royal E-harsag' (*i.e.* 'Mountain-House') which had been begun by his father. It stood about 150 yds. south-east of the great platform of the *ziggurat* and contained 36 rooms of different sizes grouped around four courtyards. Most probably, it was the royal palace. Sir Charles Woolley, however, has pointed out how closely its plan resembles that of the normal Sumerian temple, and this brings us to a fact of great political significance—Dungi, at an uncertain date in his reign, symbolized his recovery of the ancient empire of Sargon and Narâm-Sin by reviving the Akkadian custom of king-worship and proclaiming himself to be a god incarnate upon earth, *the divine Dungi, god of his land*.

The innovation was a popular one, for it chimed well with the nationalist spirit of the age. A temple was dedicated to him at Lagash. The seventh month of the year was re-named *Month of the Feast of the divine Dungi*, and a great number of excessively boring hymns were composed in his honour by different priesthoods and no doubt sung at this festival.

*Dungi of Destiny gloriously assumed the rule of Larak
He adorned in its station the River-House, the house of the Font of
Babbar.*

*He appointed firstling plants and firstling fruits. He presented bread.
Babbar set justice and true-speaking in all his words.*

Dungi of Destiny gloriously assumed the rule of Uruk . . .

and so-on *ad nauseam*, the object being to glorify Dungi's generosity in repairing and re-endowing various city temples—a task in which he was as indefatigable as his father, more

or less rebuilding the temples of Nergal at Kutha, Enki at Eridu, Damgalnunna at Nippur, and others, as well as repairing Gudea's famous E-Ninnû at Lagash.

But the monument most worthy of so great a king is not one of these, but the shrine *par excellence* of his own divinity, the vast mortuary temple and sepulchre of his dynasty, which he founded, and which was excavated by the Joint Expedition during the winter of 1930-31. Originally, this building consisted simply of a deep brick-lined shaft from which access was gained to two subterranean vaults, each roughly 13 ft. wide and 17 ft. high, the larger being about 35 and the smaller about 25 ft. long. Steps led down into the central shaft and then branched left and right into the vaults.

Very possibly, a temporary building of brick was raised above the tombs at ground-level, but this was afterwards replaced by the mortuary temple which was found by the excavators—a great rectangle of some 115 ft. by 87 ft., with massive buttressed walls nearly 10 ft. thick. An ornamental gateway in the north-east wall led through a lobby to the central courtyard. Against the opposite wall stood a large altar, flanked by doors leading to two rooms which must have been the actual sanctuaries of the cult of the dead king. One of these contained the ruins of two altars, once lavishly over-plastered with gold-leaf. Fragments of sheet-gold inlaid with heart-shaped tesserae of agate suggest that its walls were richly decorated. Another room on the north-west side of the court also contained an altar and remains of similar wall-decoration in gold and lapis, whilst stars and sun-rays in the same materials were found in a small room adjoining, along with fragments of a large bull made of copper hammered on wood. The doors opening on to the court, too, had been overlaid with gold. These poor scraps of metal, twisted by the fire which finally consumed the place, are all that survive to tantalize us with a glimpse of what the last resting-place of the deified king must have been in its splendour.

The scientific fashion in which this building was excavated has allowed its proper weight to every scrap of evidence provided by mere bricks and mortar, and so a very curious problem has been raised. It is absolutely certain that the

two vaulted tombs were occupied and closed at the same time and that it was only later that the temporary structure above them was replaced by the great permanent temple. Yet both the vaults *and* the temple are built throughout with bricks stamped with the name of Dungi. Who, then, were buried in the vaults? If it was Dungi and his wife, as one might have supposed, then the temple proper must have been built (with bricks bearing his name) by his son Bur-Sin I : but Bur-Sin afterward added two wings to the temple, using his own bricks. Then did Dungi build both tombs and temple for his father and mother, and did he himself lie in one of the vaults made later by his son?

Dungi had no doubt seen in the revival of emperor-worship a further step toward his great goal of consolidation. The exaltation of the ruler to the status of a national god should (and the situation is not quite without parallel to-day!) strengthen and confirm the newly-created spirit of pan-Sumerianism. Having achieved this, he could go on to the next task. The date-formula for his fourteenth year records that one of his daughters *was exalted to the mistress-ship of Marhashi, i.e.,* she became queen, no doubt by marriage, of this state, which lay in the eastern mountains, north of Elam and probably not far from the modern Kurdish district of Sulaimâniyeh. Sulaimâniyeh is the most fertile part of Kurdistan, and we may be sure that Dungi rubbed his hands at thus attaching it to the Sumerian crown. His eyes must long have been directed across the Tigris, toward the lands from which misfortune had descended upon Sumer in the past, and now his arm stretched out whither his eye had looked. The long period of quiet internal settlement was over. The sixteenth year was, significantly, the *year when the citizens of Ur were conscripted as longbowmen*. Compulsory military training had begun. Having assured to himself the countries which Sargon had held between the rivers, the king was now preparing to repeat the exploits of his great predecessor beyond them and to make Ur the capital, not of el-'Irâq, but of the middle East.

In the twenty-second year, the storm broke. Ganhar, a state lying probably somewhere south of Marhashi, was

invaded and subdued. We may imagine the whole eastern mountain-range, from Elam northward, to have been populated at this time by semi-civilized tribes, the less backward of whom had probably acquired a more or less convincing veneer of Sumero-Akkadian culture. The next two years saw Dungi carrying his arms farther north, well into what was afterwards the kingdom of Assyria, conquering the state of Simurum which probably lay on the Upper Zab river, about 180 miles due north of Baghdâd. This district he used as a base for ten successive campaigns against the mountain-land of Lulubu, the conquest of which Narâm-Sin had commemorated on his famous stela.¹ The hardy mountaineers against whom he fought had put on a degree of civilization since Narâm-Sin's day ; for one of their kings, who bore the good Akkadian name of Annubânini and who probably lived not very long before Dungi's time, has left us a fine memorial of himself carved in rock in the gorge of the Hulwân river near Ser-i-pul-i-Zohab, just across the 'Irâqi-Persian border. The sculpture shows him adoring the goddess Ishtar, whilst beneath him, miserable and naked, crouch the captives of his wars. The Akkadian inscription invites a large selection of gods to *curse with an evil curse* whatever impious vandal dares destroy the effigies of *Annubânini the mighty king, king of Lulubum*, and his goddess.

The probability is that most of the Shubarian and other tribes east of the Tigris were ruled by Akkadian princes, descendants of followers of Sargon and Narâm-Sin who—like the Norman nobles in Ireland—had carved out fiefs for themselves which, with the collapse of the central government, became independent principalities. Farther south in Elam, the venerable city of Susa was ruled by an Akkadian family. *Puzur-Shushinak*, isag of Susa, governor of the land of Elam, son of *Shimbi-ishhuq*, who seems to have reigned very shortly before Ur-Nammu of Sumer, has left us a number of Akkadian inscriptions (as well as some in the primitive 'Proto-Elamite' hieroglyphs) or stone statues, stelæ, etc., in which he claims to have conquered Kimash and a long list of other places which we cannot now identify. His name, and his father's, are pure Semitic. In Dungi's time Susa belonged to the

¹ See Ch. III.

kingdom of Ur, pack and parcel; and its *isag*, Urkium, again has a Semitic name. There is no evidence that Dungi ever conquered the place by force of arms. As Prof. Langdon (*Cambridge Ancient Hist.*, Vol. I) says: 'Accustomed to the beneficent rule of a Mesopotamian kingdom in the age of Sargon, and disciples of the fine civilization of Sumer since the dawn of history, Susa welcomed the Sumerian renaissance after the blight of the occupation of Gutium.' Dungi (is it necessary to add?) rebuilt the temple of the chief Susian god, In-Shushinak. It also appears that he was in control of Dilmun (*i.e.* the Persian coast and the island of Bahrên) and Adamdun, another Persian province, while in (probably) 2249 B.C. he married off another of his daughters to the *isag* of Anshan, the very important Elamite state with which Gudea had had trouble during the previous century. Thus, he was undisputed master of western Persia, with its rich mineral deposits, as far north as southern Kurdistan.

His whole object now was the subdual of the fertile plain between the Tigris and the Kurdish mountains, and, as far as possible, of the mountains themselves. His purpose in this was not only to secure his kingdom against another invasion from the highlands, but also to become master of the important eastern trade-routes. His principal opponents, as we have seen, were the Lulubu, who probably occupied, or were allied with, nearly all the districts that he fought against. Hurshi, which probably lay somewhere east of the river 'Udhaim, fell to him in his twenty-fifth year; but the twenty-ninth to the thirty-ninth years of his reign are marked by a series of disastrous set-backs. First, Ganhar and Simurum rebelled and took three years to bring to heel again. Then the vitally important state of Anshan, which he must have thought finally secured by his daughter's marriage, suddenly turned against him (bribed, perhaps, into doing so by the hard-pressed Lulubu) and had to be pacified by force of arms—doubtless in the eastern manner of pacification which involves wholesale looting, burning of crops and villages and enslavement of prisoners, accompanied or unaccompanied by torture and massacre according to the tastes of the commander.

The set-back was a severe one. Dungi was no longer a

THE SUMERIAN RENAISSANCE

young man. For the next ten years—save for one campaign against the unidentified district of Sashrum—he sent no more armies across the Tigris, consoling himself with the erection of a temple to his own divinity and of a great fort called Bad-mada, ‘stronghold of the land’, presumably on the eastern frontier.

Then, in the forty-third year of his reign, came a renewed bid for empire, and immediate victory : the defeat of the armies of Simurum, Lulubu and Ganhar and the capture of the city of Urbillum, which commanded then, as it commands to-day, the whole rich plain between the Upper and Lower Zab. Urbillum, the modern Arbîl, the Arbailu of the Assyrians and the Arbela of the Greeks, near which Alexander the Great broke finally and irremediably the vast army of Darius of Persia, is one of the oldest inhabited cities on earth, rising above the plain upon an enormous *tell* composed of the ruins of its own past. Its population at this time was certainly Shubarian, for the Semites of Ashur had not penetrated far into the eastern plain ; but its capture made Dungi master also of the petty Assyrian city-state, one day to be the mistress of the known world, whose capital lay some 70 miles south-west of it upon the opposite bank of the Tigris.

Encouraged by this success, the aged god-emperor (he must have been between sixty and seventy years old) ranged yet farther afield. His forty-fourth year was the *year when the divine Dungi, the mighty man, king of Ur, king of the Four Quarters, conquered Kimash, Humurti and their lands in one day—i.e. in one decisive battle.* Both these were probably mountain districts east of Arbîl. Next year the king rested on his laurels, but the year after Hurshi rebelled and was subdued again ; and the year after that ‘Dungi of Destiny’ had suffered the common destiny of kings.

Dungi was certainly one of the ablest of Babylonian monarchs. Every act of his reign appears as part of a consistent and far-sighted policy. Like Louis XI of France, he knew how to bide his time without swerving a jot from his intention. Indeed, there are many parallels between these two monarchs, separated as they are by about thirty-six centuries. Both succeeded to a kingdom which had only recently been freed

from foreign tyranny. Both feared, and were determined to prevent, a renewal of that tyranny. Both realized that their first task lay in the firm establishment of their authority within their own borders, the development of their country's commercial and military resources. Both were fighters, yet both were glad to attain their ends, when possible, by peaceful means; and both, according to their different lights, were deeply pious. The long period of consolidation, the well-planned campaigns against the ancient enemies on the north-eastern frontier, the interval of retrenchment and recuperation after the disastrous middle period of the reign, and finally the triumphant return to the old object—all these show Dungi to have been a statesman and ruler of no common metal. Some authorities have credited him, on slender evidence, with an empire stretching far west of the Euphrates and north of Assyria. That Sumerian trade, and with it Sumerian culture, reached both to Asia Minor and to the Mediterranean at this period, there is no doubt. But the difficulty he experienced in subduing lands much nearer home and the fact that great racial movements were taking place in the west during his lifetime—movements which were finally to bring his empire into ruin—make it improbable that Dungi's conquests ever rivalled those of Narâm-Sin, though some Syrian towns may have paid nominal allegiance to him. Be that as it may, his long reign had seen the fulfilment of the prayer uttered more than a century earlier by Gudca: *Let the land rest in peace, and let the countries lift up their eyes toward Sumer*. It may not be too fanciful to discover something symbolic in his devotion to Ninurta, the young warrior-god who slew the demons of chaos and ordered the world for men to live in.

The name of Dungi's queen, Shukalla, has survived, as have those of four of his sons, Ur-Zuen, Nadi, Gimil-Illil and Bur-Sin. Of these latter, all but the first are Akkadian, not Sumerian. This may be due to intermarriage between the royal family and the old Akkadian nobility; but it is equally likely that Ur-Nammu himself had really been an Akkadian and had only adopted Sumerian names for himself and his son out of policy. This assumption would explain Dungi's

revival of the Akkadian custom of emperor-worship, and some other matters.

Bur-Sin I can no longer have been a young man when he succeeded his father, for he ruled only nine years—probably from about 2231 to 2222 B.C. It does not appear that he made any attempt to enlarge the empire which he had inherited. Urbillum revolted and was reconquered in the second year. We have a record, dated in the fourth year, of thank-offerings made to Enlil at Nippur, *when the divine Bur-Sin overcame Sashrum and Shuruthum*. Another expedition had to go against Sashrum in the sixth year, and one against Huhnuri, an eastern district which had been subject to Dungi, in the seventh.

It is plain that the authority of Ur was still maintained over the whole of what was afterward Assyria ; and a most interesting proof of this is given by what may be the oldest Assyrian-Semitic inscription in the world, a gypsum tablet found by the Germans at Ashur, bearing the legend : *The house of the goddess Bélat-Ekallim, his lady, for the life of the mighty Bur-Sin, king of Ur and king of the Four Quarters, and also for his own life, has Zâriqum, viceroy of Ashur, built*. This Zâriqum, we know from another source, had also paid tribute to Dungi. Ashur, indeed, had fallen under the spell of Sumerian culture again. It had been seized, we saw in Chapter III, by a people speaking a Semitic language, closely akin to (but not identical with) Akkadian, apparently somewhere round about 2600 B.C. The city was afterward rebuilt by the invaders, who no more than the Akkadians of the south were able to resist the potent magic of Sumerian culture. They adopted cuneiform writing, as we have seen, and presently we shall find them worshipping, alongside their own tribal god Ashur or Ashir, ' the Merciful ', the Sumerian gods An, Enlil, Enki and Ninurta, using Sumerian weights and measures and studying and translating the Sumerian classics. Yet they clung to certain features of their own tribal culture which they had developed (indirectly influenced, no doubt, even at that early period, by Sumerian ideas) before they came into el-'Irâq. They had their own calendar, for example, and instead of naming the year by an event that took place in it, they dated by the name of an

THE EMPIRE OF UR

official called the *limmu* or 'eponym' who was chosen by lot at the new-year feast and held office for twelve months : e.g. *Month of Sarate, 20th day, the eponym* (being) *Ashurdāmiq son of Abi-Ili*. The business of the *limmu* was to act, during his year of office, in some obscure sacerdotal capacity ; but in very early times he must surely have had powers as great as, and similar to, those of the Judges of Israel. By the time that they had learnt to write, however, the Assyrians were ruled by permanent chieftains who called themselves *ishshakku* or *shakanakku* (both words borrowed from the Sumerian) and to whom the *limmu* was subservient.

Of the history of Ashur before the days of Zâriqum, we know next to nothing. A certain Ititi, son of Iakulaba, who dedicated a tablet of alabaster to the goddess Ishtar, possibly belongs to this obscure period. Later traditions assert that two rulers, Aushpia and Kikia, whose names may or may not be Shubarian, but are certainly neither Sumerian nor Semitic, founded the temple of Ashur and the wall of the city respectively. The rest is silence.

Apart from this important Assyrian inscription, most of the texts relating to Bur-Sin's reign describe his activities as a temple-builder, in which capacity he showed himself a true son of his father. As already mentioned, he added two wings, one on the south-east and the other on the north-west to the family mortuary at Ur. The building on the south-east was arranged so as to enclose the side-door of the original temple, of which it was simply a reproduction on a smaller scale. There were two vaults, smaller than those in Dungi's building and not sunk so deeply. They too seem to have been built and closed before the temple proper was put up. They may, then, very possibly have contained the bones of the great Dungi and his wife Shukalla. The fragment of an inscribed marble vase bearing the name of Ur-Nammu which was found in one of them, having been overlooked by the plunderers, would presumably be a family heirloom. The other wing was smaller and rather irregular in plan, being built round the western corner of the old structure with which, however, it did not communicate. There was a vault about 30 ft. long under the south-western side, and two smaller ones underlying

the courtyard and an adjoining room. Here again, the underground constructions were older than those above ground ; but if Bur-Sin himself both built this wing and was buried in it, one of the vaults must have been reopened after his death to receive his corpse. The whole problem of these vaults is an obscure one. Probably it will never be solved.

Apart from this, Bur-Sin was responsible for several other important buildings at Ur. He restored the very ancient gate-house which stood at the eastern corner of the great platform of the *ziggurat*. This building, like so many gateways in the ancient East, appears to have been used as a court of justice and record-office, from which it had the name E-dublalmah or ' noble storehouse of writings '. In an inscription now in the University Museum of Pennsylvania, Bur-Sin speaks of it as the judgement-house of the god Nannar, *his net that the foeman of Bur-Sin does not evade*, and says that *he made it seemly for him ; with gold, silver and lapis-lazuli fashioned it aright. Bur-Sin's day shall thereby be prolonged !*

South-west of this he built the large and important structure called E-gepar-ku or ' house of the holy cloister ', which served both as a shrine for Ningal, the wife of Nannar, and as a residence for her priests. This building thoroughly deserved its name (*gepar* or *gig-par* means literally ' dark chamber '), being a positive labyrinth of corridors and chambers, covering an area of over 53,000 sq. ft. and including two sanctuaries of the goddess, another of the deified Bur-Sin and a maze of storerooms, kitchens, weaving-sheds and the like, all enclosed by a thick buttressed wall and approached by narrow gates and winding corridors. Though impressive in its size, it was built only of crude *libn* or sun-dried mud-brick. It is as though Bur-Sin realized that old age and death were at his door and was in haste to pile up buildings in the time left him, caring little for their permanency so long as his brick-stamps might be found in as many different places as his father's. Against the north-eastern face of the *ziggurat*-platform, in the angle between it and the wall of the great courtyard built by Ur-Nammu, there had stood since remote antiquity a temple called E-nunmah, ' lordly and noble house ' containing shrines of Nannar and Ningal. This Bur-Sin also rebuilt, but again

his work was hasty and has been almost obliterated by that of later and more leisured kings.

Outside Ur, too, the workmen—many of them, no doubt, slaves taken in his father's wars—were kept busy piling brick on brick as fast as the rods of the taskmasters could make them. Nippur received so many benefactions that Bur-Sin felt justified in adding two fresh clauses to his official titulary : *Divine Bur-Sin, named by Enlil in Nippur, upraiser of the House of Enlil*. The discovery by Arab plunderers, at a site called Duraihem near Nippur, of a great hoard of cuneiform tablets dealing with the temple revenues, has given us a fair idea of the wealth and importance of the Sumerian holy of holies in the days of the III Dynasty. Duraihem (its ancient name is unknown) was apparently the receiving-station for the tributes of grain, sheep, cattle, pigs, *etc., etc.*, which were sent by all the cities and provinces of the Empire to the great shrine of Enlil. The documents, though not of very great interest to the general reader, throw a flood of light on the complex political organization of the period.

One other religious work of Bur-Sin remains to be listed. He rebuilt the ancient and immensely sacred *ziggurat* of Enki, the god of earth and the waters under the earth, at Eridu (Abu-Shahrên), and provided it with an almost unheard-of luxury—a flight of polished marble steps. Probably, too, it was he who brought thither the massive blocks of basalt and granite—the largest stones found in any Sumerian ruin—which still lie near the summit of the lonely and mysterious Tell Abu-Shahrên. Taylor, exploring these mounds in the XIX cent., found also many fragments of gold and marble, so that altogether Bur-Sin's restoration of E-abzu, 'House of the Abyss', must have been of a nobler and more permanent character than most of his work.

Bur-Sin was succeeded by his son Gimil-Sin, whose name is Akkadian, like his own. He seems to have held office as a judge during his father's lifetime, and from this and the fact that he too reigned only nine years (probably 2222 to 2213 B.C.) we may conclude that he had been born some long time before his father's accession. His reign is the least interesting of the dynasty, and marks the beginning of its decline. Only

THE SUMERIAN RENAISSANCE

two wars are recorded, a punitive expedition against Simanum in the third year, and one against Zabshali in the seventh. Gimil-Sin believed as firmly as his predecessors in his own godhead. Indeed, he carried this belief to the quaint extreme of claiming to be the husband of the goddess Annunitum. Polygamy being usual in Sumer, it is to be supposed that his merely human wives felt no grounds for complaint. The patriotic prefect of Ur and captain of the citadel, Lulgal-magurri, demonstrated his loyalty by founding a temple to the god Gimil-Sin. Another such temple existed at Eshnunna. It is easy to smile at such excesses, but emperor-worship was a most needful bond of state. A study of the official documents of this reign shows that a new administrative policy had been inaugurated : that of concentrating the authority over the various provinces into as few hands as possible. The governorship of all lands east of the Tigris was conferred, pack and parcel, upon the able grand vizir, Arad-Nannar son of Ur-Dunpac, in whose family the grand-vizirship had been hereditary for three generations and who had himself been appointed by Dungi. This suggests that the provinces were growing restless and needed a strong and trusty arm for their control. But still more significant of danger and disruption is the year-date for the fourth year : *year when the wall of the West, the 'Barrier of Tidnum' was built*. Who the people of Tidnum were, and why a wall was necessary to keep them out, we shall see presently. There was writing on that wall, could but the men of Ur have read it.

4. *Life under the Empire*

Before we watch the final tragedy and ruin of the last dynasty of Ur, we may amuse ourselves by speculating as to the kind of life led by those who were born early enough to take part in the victories of Dungi and to return thanks for their prosperity in the temples of Bur-Sin. In some respects, we are extremely well-informed as to the daily life of the Sumerians at the end of the third millennium B.C., whilst in others we are—and shall probably remain—uncommonly hazy. Since

no business transaction of any sort was good in Sumerian law unless it had been duly recorded upon a clay tablet, signed, sealed and witnessed, we know an almost boring amount about the commercial life of the time, for these 'contract-tablets' turn up in hundreds, sometimes in thousands, on every excavated site, and the student who is not a specialist in commercial documents soon becomes heartily sick of this sort of thing :

Twelve boats of 60 gur¹ burthen for 20 qa¹ (each per day), two boats of 50 gur burthen for 17 qa, four boats of 40 gur burthen for 15 qa ; captain, Nedug (?) : fourteen boats of 60 gur burthen for 20 qa, three boats of 40 gur burthen for 15 qa ; captain, Atummu : (hired) up to 22 days, their (price in) corn is 48½ gur from Umma, from the quay, up to Nippur . . .

The above, which is dated in the fourth year of Gimil-Sin (the year in which he built that ominous wall against Tidnum), is simply the record of the chartering of certain boats with their complements to carry a mixed cargo of merchandise from Umma to Nippur by river, the charter-price being paid in corn at so much per boat per diem. The Sumerians, having no coinage, used grain as a medium of exchange in preference to almost any other commodity except silver. The little fleet of thirty-five boats—doubtless they were like enough to the single-masted barques, generally from 35 to 45 ft. long, which ply on the Tigris and Euphrates to this day—would have a pleasant journey up the Euphrates. Leaving Umma and its *ziggurat* (whose ruins still rise to a height of nearly 50 ft. above the plain) to drop slowly out of sight, they would sail west-north-west over what is now waterless desert and after perhaps a week would break their journey at the ancient city of Adab, surrounded, like Ur, by a canal from the river. The temple of the goddess Aruru there would be a noble sight, for Ur-Nammu and his successors had worked lovingly on it and records of the city's prosperity in their reigns have survived until to-day. Perhaps the crews were allowed shore-leave here and disappeared into the winding alleys of the common quarter,

¹ These are measures of grain, 300 qa = 1 royal gur = roughly, 330 lb., more or less.

tripping over goats and children, squeezing to the wall to let a laden donkey pass, just as one does in the *sugs* of Baghdâd to this day, and coming finally to anchor in a beer-shop kept by some beldame who doubtless took pleasure in reflecting (if she knew enough history) that just such a disreputable old party as herself had once risen to be queen of Kish.¹

Nippur would be reached probably on about the tenth day. The enormous city, pierced through the middle by the Shatt-en-Nil canal and fed by numerous subsidiary canals, would, as they sailed into the heart of it, close about them like a ravine of masonry. Men of all known nations jostled each other on the far-stretching quays : Elamites with dark faces and woolly hair, their speech full of references to Pakshu and Ishmekarab and such strange gods, Lulubî, chattering in bad Akkadian, Assyrians, easily distinguished by their short muscular figures and luxuriant beards, Shubarians, swearing by their god Lahuratil, Gutî, walking humbly now but remembering that their forefathers had sacked this very city, strange folk from every land between Cilicia and the Persian Gulf and—most significant of all—lean wild men from the West, half-savage Amorites, at once nervous and contemptuous at the unfamiliar bustle of a great town, but darting eyes as quick and inhuman as a lizard's at all the evidences of wealth about them, perhaps matching, in imagination, their hard-bitten desert bodies against those of the plump Sumerians in their fancy clothes, much as you may see an Afghan from beyond the Khyber eyeing a spectacled and sedentary Hindu.

The business of unlading the boats would occupy our party for a while : but when it was over, we may perhaps assume that either Captain Nedug or Captain Atummu, those honest men, would feel impelled to visit the greatest temple of all Sumer and pay his respects to Enlil—*voir Dieu en passant*, as the medieval French phrase puts it. Ascending the terrace beside the canal, he would enter by one of the gates in the western wall of the vast sacred enclosure and, passing storehouses and shrines innumerable, find himself at last at the foot of the platform from which E-kur, ' the Mountain-House ', towered into the air. He would be a duller man than we have any

¹ Cf. Ch. III.

reason to suppose he was if that sight did not both stir and awe him. The great *ziggurat* of the wind-god was already at least one thousand years old. Kings whose names we no longer know had built it in their piety. Narâm-Sin the mighty had restored it. Every famous and worthy king of Sumer or Akkad had made offerings there. The reigning god-emperor, the divine Gimil-Sin, was proud to claim that Enlil of Nippur favoured him. A priest of the god would receive our visitor and conduct him to some sanctuary open to the lay-worshipper. Here a statue of 'Enlil king of the countries', perhaps of gold and lapis-lazuli, would be enthroned. With his wrist held lightly by the priest, the pilgrim would advance and, kissing his hand to the image, just as a modern Persian will kiss his hand in greeting to his superior, would recite his prayer, adding, like a loyal subject, an intercession for the long life of Gimil-Sin of Ur—not knowing, any more than we can know our future, that Gimil-Sin had only five more years to live and that, before thirty years had passed fire would consume the palaces of Ur and strangers enjoy the mastery of Sumer.

Many such sketches might be drawn. Life in Sumer at the end of the XXIII cent. B.C. was fully as complex, as highly-organized, as life in Europe at any time up to the Industrial Revolution. The great kings of Ur had been consistent and very successful in their policy of standardization. There is good reason to believe that they reduced to a single code the laws which, until their time, had varied (as in the early Middle Ages) from city to city and district to district. They certainly introduced a standard system of weights throughout the Empire—a reform of great importance to people who, as we have just seen, reckoned prices by weight of grain or metal. In connection with this, a government department called E-kishibba, 'the Seal-House', seems to have been established at Ur and sets of officially certified standard weights deposited in the various city-temples. Specimens of these have come to light. A typical one from Lagash is inscribed: *Five true minae of Gimil-Sin, the mighty king, king of Ur, king of the Four Quarters*. Another, from Ur, seems to have belonged to the archetypal set kept in the E-kishibba itself. These weights are of stone, the smaller ones usually cigar-shaped, the larger

delightfully carved in the shape of ducks with their heads thrown back between their wings to preen.

As explained already, the numeral system of the Sumerians was sexagesimal ; and by the time of the III Dyn. of Ur, their mathematical knowledge, though not precisely brilliant, was still considerable. They used separate figures for the different multiples of 6— $\frac{1}{6}$, 60, 600, 3,600, 36,000, 216,000, 2,160,000, and 12,960,000 ; and though they had also a separate sign for 10,¹ they preferred to reckon broken numbers from the nearest multiple of 6, often making use, for this purpose, of a *minus* sign. In actual practice, the writing of large numbers by this system became almost unimaginably clumsy. To aid the unfortunate student in the calculations necessary before he could even understand what was written in front of him, tables of multiplication and division were drawn up. One such dealt with the 'grand number' 12,960,000 or 60^4 and showed its fractions, thus :

$$\begin{array}{ll} 60^4, \frac{2}{3} \text{ of it is } 40 \times 60^3, \\ \text{half of it} & \text{,, } 30 \times 60^3, \\ \frac{1}{3} \text{ of it} & \text{,, } 20 \times 60^3, \end{array}$$

and so forth. All this shows the Sumerians as a people not without mathematical ability, but hopelessly handicapped by an inadequate system of notation. It is possible, it is even likely, that that gifted race, in the course of their long history, produced at least one mathematician of the mental calibre of Newton or Einstein. But the barbarous clumsiness of the tools which he would have to use effectually prevented our hypothetical genius from stumbling upon the truths of gravity or relativity.

Though cut off from the domain of pure mathematics, the Sumerians had, by the XXIII cent. B.C., attained a respectable proficiency in practical arithmetic and geometry. They could extract square and cube roots and calculate the areas of triangles and other regular figures. They had evolved a method of checking their results by cross-reckonings. They

¹ There are traces of the sexagesimal system having been influenced, at a very early date, by a foreign decimal system which may have been introduced during the prehistoric Jemdet-Nasr Period.

understood the relationship between the sides and the diagonals of a quadrilateral ; and in calculating the area of an irregular figure, such as a field or garden, they employed the sensible and reasonably accurate method of dividing it up into the nearest possible number of rectangles and triangles. It is possible that they had learned to reckon the day from midnight instead of from dawn or sunset, though this system never came into general use, and they probably possessed both the sundial and the clepsydra or water-clock : but it does not appear that they recognized any division of time smaller than four minutes or $\frac{1}{3\frac{1}{6}}$ of a day, whereas the ancient Egyptians (who used the decimal system) could calculate times to the nearest $\frac{1}{3}$ of a second.¹

That astronomy, or more accurately astrology, was studied in Babylonia from the very earliest times, everyone knows. The Greeks—always childishly ready to believe in the antiquity of Oriental civilizations as compared with their own—used to tell one another with awe that the men of Babylon had written records of astronomical observations going back for at least half a million years ! Actually, the ‘ science ’ of astrology was more carefully studied by the Semitic Babylonians of the second and first millennia B.C. than by the Sumerians. The latter probably—but not quite certainly—recognized the difference between all five visible planets and the fixed stars ; and it was they who divided the track of the sun across the sky into three parallel ‘ paths ’ dedicated to An, Enlil and Enki ; but it is not easy for us to say—seeing that most of the astronomical texts that have survived are of late date—exactly how much of the considerable knowledge of the stars which the later Babylonians certainly possessed was of Sumerian origin ; and the same applies to the study of medicine which—though it never freed itself from the taint of magic—was in a flourishing state in el-‘Irâq by 1900 B.C. at least. At that time, physicians were able to perform surgical operations such as lancing swellings and removing cataracts from the eye, and this skill certainly dates back to Sumerian days. By about the end of the second millennium, Babylonian and Assyrian doctors fully under-

¹ In theory, that is. Of course they had no instrument delicate enough for measuring such a period.

THE SUMERIAN RENAISSANCE

stood the medicinal value of such useful drugs and herbs as alum, hyssop, opoponax, sal-ammoniac, ricinus, turpentine, sulphur, turmeric, styrax, myrrh, gum-tragacanth, arsenic, etc., though they mixed them with useless ingredients such as powdered lapis-lazuli and disgusting ones like gazelle's dung. They also made use of blistering, massage and clysters.

It is unfortunate that our knowledge of Sumerian law, which would be a subject of great interest for the study of general social evolution, is very hazy. In early times, as we have seen, each city had its own legal code ; but there is some evidence that the great kings of the III Dyn. of Ur crowned their work of consolidation by the establishment of a common system of laws for the whole country. Of this great code, however, next to nothing has survived. A few isolated laws are preserved on inscriptions dating from just after the fall of Ur. One group has for its object the preservation of family life and parental authority which the Sumerians, like many other ancient peoples, regarded as the very base and foundation of society. The laws are curt and laconic in expression, but perfectly comprehensible.

If a son have said to his father : ' Thou art not my father', the father shall clip his hair, put him to the branding-iron and sell him for silver.¹

If a son have said to his mother : ' Thou art not my mother', let them clip the hair on his forehead, lead him about through the city and expel him from the house.

If a father have said to his son : ' Thou art not my son', they shall expel the son from house and wall (i.e. from the city).

If a mother have said to her son : ' Thou art not my son', they shall expel the son from house and goods (i.e. from the family).

If a wife have said to her husband, who has been a plague to her : ' Thou art not my husband', she shall be thrown into the river.

If a husband have said to his wife : ' Thou art not my wife', he shall pay half a mina of silver.

Another law enacts that if a man have had sons by his lawful wife, and also his handmaiden have borne a son to her lord, the father

¹ Another and milder law sent the son into banishment but allowed him to take his share of the patrimony with him : cf. the Parable of the Prodigal Son.

shall grant their freedom to his handmaiden and their son ; but the son of the handmaiden shall not share the estate with the son of his lord.

Now in the XXI Chapter of Genesis we read that when Sarah, his lawful wife, had miraculously borne a son to Abraham in her old age, she became jealous of her handmaid Hagar, whom she herself had presented to Abraham and who had borne him Ishmael. *Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son ; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son . . . And Abraham rose up early in the morning and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away.* Since the publication of the Sumerian document quoted above, many critics have pointed out that, in acting as he did, Abraham was not behaving arbitrarily or unkindly but was fulfilling the letter of the law which must have become familiar to him during his youth in Ur of the Chaldees. The pathetic story of Hagar and Ishmael is, in fact, a slight but recognizable further proof that the tradition of Abraham's migration from Ur *via* Haran into Palestine is based on historical fact.

Other Sumerian laws which have survived in writing deal with questions of liability. The hirer of a boat had to pay its value to the owners if he sank it. A shepherd was similarly liable if he allowed lions to diminish the flock that was entrusted to him. Of the criminal law of the period we know nothing. Probably—as was certainly the case in later times—death was the penalty for all serious offences. The family laws seem harsh to us, but parents can hardly have insisted often upon applying them in their full rigour, any more than, in practice, the Roman father made any tyrannical use of his *patria potestas*. Compared with most nations of the ancient East, the Sumerians were a decidedly humane and gentle people. The massacres and tortures which defile page after page of ancient history had no place in their campaigns at home or abroad. 'Cylinder A' of Gudea shows that they thought it wrong to inflict even nursery punishments during times of festival. They did not amuse themselves with cruel sports such as bull-baiting and gladiatorial combats, as did the Kretans, the Philistines and—on occasion—the Hebrews. That they owned slaves is true, but there is no reason to suppose that they ill-

THE SUMERIAN RENAISSANCE

treated them. Slavery was a universal institution in the pre-Christian world. Nor is there, necessarily, any particular hardship in the lot of a slave, at any rate in a community where the distinction between bond and free is only a social, and not a racial or religious one. The lot of the American negroes before the Civil War was hard, not because they were slaves but because they were negroes ; and their sufferings were scarcely greater than those of the Jews in Germany to-day, who are not slaves. In Sumer, as in Greece and Rome, slaves could become free men and free men slaves, so that there was no room for the hideous doctrine that the bondsman and his master belonged to different orders of creation—the cause of all the worst evils of slavery.

So much has already been said concerning the religion of the Sumerians, the gods they adored and the demons they feared, we have had so many quotations from the hymns they chanted and the legends they told, that it seems almost superfluous to go further into the matter here. But our attempted survey of the life led in Sumer under the last dynasty of Ur would not be complete without some mention of the part played in it, not by the state religion of the kings and priests, but by the homelier domestic cults.

Most of our information comes from diggings conducted in the residential quarter of Ur, where a very great number of private houses—mostly dating from the two centuries immediately following the III Dyn.—have been uncovered. Among these houses were certain tiny public shrines, resembling the wayside chapels so familiar in Roman Catholic countries, consisting of only a couple of narrow rooms, one of them opening directly on the street. Here were found—in one or two cases—the actual cult-images of the godlings : small, very rough and ugly statues of painted limestone. These were the deities of the common people, homely and accessible beings of limited power and modest attributes. Their worshippers were in no position to present them with golden thrones and couches, with chariots adorned with lapis-lazuli, such as the great gods received from pious kings ; but—touching substitution of the will for the deed !—clay models of beds and chariots with wheels that really turned have been found in their chapels

along with small stone mace-heads imitating the huge inscribed ones placed in the royal temples.

Nor were the patron deities of the different cities forgotten by the citizens whom they protected. On every Sumerian and Assyrian site, and also at Susa, innumerable little figures of baked clay—some very rough, others executed with skill and taste—are turned up by the spade. These represent the god or goddess of the city, generally with some distinguishing attribute. Nannar, on the figures from Ur, wears the horned crown of the moon. Those from Lagash show Ningirsu grasping his *sharur*, his sacred club with which he cracks the skulls of his enemies. Sometimes the god is represented in a very homely fashion, taking the goddess on his knees and kissing her ! These figures were probably made in the temples and sold to the devout for enshrinement and worship in their own homes. Almost all the private houses excavated at Ur contained family chapels—fair-sized rooms generally with a decorated and whitewashed altar of mud-brick and a hearth and flue, presumably for burning incense. What ceremonies were performed here and which gods invoked, whether the Sumerians were the inventors of the Victorian institution of ‘family prayers’, we do not know : but it is reasonable to assume that the little terra-cotta idols just spoken of were kept in such chapels and adored either regularly or as occasion required.

The real feelings of the Sumerians toward their gods and godlings are rather difficult for us to gauge. Their religion certainly had its spiritual side, and this is well illustrated by the ‘Cylinders of Gudea’, where the conception of a god who loves his worshippers and who values righteousness more than burnt-offerings is clearly set forth. *No mother have I, says Gudea, thou art my mother. No father have I ; thou art my father.* and his predecessor, Urukagina, three centuries earlier, attributed the much-needed judicial reforms which he had established to the direct inspiration of Ningirsu. In another text, the sun-god is spoken of as *the land’s judge, doomster and righteous guide*, whilst in the innumerable hymns to the mother-goddess under her various titles great emphasis is laid on her tenderness toward suffering mankind. But alongside these exalted

THE SUMERIAN RENAISSANCE

conceptions of the righteousness and loving-kindness of God—conceptions which are the primitive germ of those so nobly developed in later centuries by the Hebrew Prophets—there survived the old savage notion that God was simply a kind of natural force, unmoral, incalculable and immensely dangerous, something to be cajoled and propitiated instead of being loved and served—a sort of supernatural wild animal. It crops up again and again in the Sumerian hymns and prayers, swamping the more enlightened beliefs just cited. A hymn to Nergal, god of the underworld, illustrates this :

*O Lord, enter not into the tavern,
nor slay the old woman sitting at the ale-bench.
O Lord, enter not into the council-chamber,
nor smite the wise elder who is sitting there.
O Lord, stand not in the playground,
nor drive the little ones away from the playground.
Enter not into the place where the music of the harp resounds,
nor drive away the youth who understands the music of the harp.¹*

Here, the god is nothing more nor less than a divine nuisance, to be kept quiet and held at a distance at all costs. There is no suggestion that the damage he threatens to do is a punishment for sin, for the innocent child and the prudent councillor are numbered among his victims. He smites because it is his nature to smite. A Sumerian theologian would have been entirely of one mind with Browning's Caliban who—

'Thinketh, such shows nor right nor wrong in Him,
Nor kind, nor cruel : He is strong and Lord.
'Am strong myself compared to yonder crabs
That march now from the mountain to the sea ;
'Let twenty pass, and stone the twentyfirst,
Loving not, hating not, just choosing so.

The Sumerians certainly thought that virtue pleased the gods and vice angered them. But their religious writings lay no such stress on this doctrine—the very essence and basis of religion as we understand it—as do, for example, those of the

¹ Based on the German translation of Meissner, *Babylonien und Assyrien*, Band II.

ancient Egyptians, whose beliefs, for all the gross leaven of primitive African superstition which they contain, were incomparably loftier and more spiritual. It was not by the offering of a humble and a contrite heart but by the slaughter of sacrificial animals, the performance of intricate and tedious magical ceremonies, the repetition of endless hymns of praise, that the gods of the Sumerians could be bribed, if not to help their worshippers, at least to refrain from hurting them. This tendency toward pure soulless mechanism or lip-service, the separation of religion and morality, was (and to a slightly lesser extent is) common to nearly all eastern creeds. It aroused the fury of the Hebrew Prophets who insisted that Jehovah was a god not merely of might but of right.

Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Thus, more than a thousand years after the Sumerians had disappeared from the face of the earth, wrote Micah. At a glance, the faith he preached seems to differ from that of a Gudea or a Dungi as wine from water: but the first is really only the logical outcome of the second. The Hebrews, with their extraordinary moral genius, were only developing and giving a more perfect expression to ideas which—in however crude and feeble a form, however smothered by barbarous and abject superstitions—had existed before their time, and had been brought into existence, at least in part, by the Sumerians.

CHAPTER VI

FROM THE FALL OF UR TO THE RISE OF BABYLON

1. *The Amorite Invasion*

Toward the end of Chapter III we saw that when the kings of Agade conducted campaigns west of the Euphrates into Syria, in about 2500-2400 B.C., they met there a race of men speaking a Semitic language similar to their own. These men were called in Sumerian simply *People of Martu*, 'People of the West', a name which the Akkadians translated as 'People of Amurru', *Amorites*. The Amorite language belongs to the sub-family known as 'W. Semitic'. That is, it is more closely related to Hebrew than is Akkadian. As early as the middle of the III millennium B.C., it appears, some of the tribes who spoke this tongue were, to a certain degree, civilized. They worshipped, in addition to the ubiquitous Semitic mother-goddess Ishtar or Astarte, a national god Amurru, 'He of the West', who is represented in later art as a warrior armed with a scourge or sword; the weather-god Adad (Biblical Hadad or Rimmon), generally depicted as a horned man bearing an axe and thunderbolt; and the agricultural god Dagan (Biblical Dagon¹). During the centuries following the collapse of the Dynasty of Agade, it appears that a number of tribes to whom (though they may actually have been of mixed origin) the generic name 'Amorite' can conveniently be given, were drifting eastward into el-'Irâq, settling first on the middle Euphrates and then filtering downstream toward Akkad. It

¹ He appears in the Bible as a god of the Philistines, who had evidently taken over his cult from the older people of Canaan. French excavators at Ugarit on the Syrian coast have unearthed a temple to Dagon dating from about the XIX cent. B.C.

THE AMORITE INVASION

seems that their headquarters were in the district of Mari or Maer, about 200 miles north-west of Agade. These, however, were only the spearhead of the Amorite movement. Behind them and on their right flank—*i.e.* farther up the Euphrates and westward in the Syro-Arabian desert—were brothers of theirs who had either adopted or had never emerged from the simple nomad life of the modern Badûw.

History was repeating itself. From north-west and west, a strange race, and a fierce one, was pressing forward into el-'Irâq. It should now be fairly obvious why Gimil-Sin found it necessary to build a Wall in the West.

Gimil-Sin ceased to be troubled by politics, internal or external, probably in 2213 B.C., and was succeeded by his son Ibi-Sin. Though this ill-fated king ruled for twenty-five years, his monuments are of the highest rarity, and even the list of his date-formulæ is unhappily incomplete. Prior to the excavation of Ur, a few seals belonging to court officials were the only inscriptions of the period known. The numbers of these has now been added to, so that we know a good deal about the Civil Service during this reign. Of particular and almost sentimental interest are the seals of an Akkadian named Liburanni-Sin, the tutor of the king's children, and Entemenne 'his children's attendant'. The young family of the god-emperor would of course be surrounded by every care and luxury which a child-loving people could devise; but one prefers not to speculate about what became of them in the end.

The year-dates of Ibi-Sin cannot be arranged in their right order. It seems as though his early years were spent in the traditional occupation of enriching and adorning temples. We read of the dedication of thrones to Nannar and Enlil and so forth; but we read also of the building of a 'great wall' and of the fortification of Ur and Nippur. The sky was darkening. How far the empire of Dungi had already dropped to pieces, we do not know. Huhnuri—always a storm-centre—and the vitally important eastern province of Anshan revolted, probably early in the reign, but Ibi-Sin was able to crush them for the moment. It is probably to about this date that we should attribute the only long inscription of the king, a clay tablet in four columns recording the dedication of two golden

vessels as a thank-offering to Nannar, *the lord who shines alone in heaven*, by Ibi-Sin, *god of his land, grand master of every power, wise, mighty king, king of Ur, king of the Four Quarters, when he had stricken Susa, Adamdun and Awan like a storm; in one day had subdued them, and had seized Lua (?) their lord*. This is the record of a decisive victory; but there are victories which are only less ruinous than defeats. Fifty years earlier, the idea that a king of Ur would ever have to fight against Susa would have been laughed at. That city had been the loyalest, the most favoured of all the foreign dependencies. Its tradition of subservience went back to Narâm-Sin's day. But now we find it ranged with two other powerful Elamite city-states in full rebellion, defeated for the moment, as its neighbour Anshan had been defeated, but in no wise subdued. By the middle of his reign, it is questionable whether Ibi-Sin controlled a foot of ground beyond the Tigris.

His situation was an appalling one. With the flames of revolt blazing heavens-high along his eastern frontier, his traditional enemies of the mountains whetting their swords and telling tales of the days when their ancestors had gone down to the plains and worked their will there, he was menaced from the north and west by the continually-increasing pressure of the Amorite movement, a movement whose character had changed suddenly from that of a peaceful migration and had become an armed assault. Ringed in as he was by a whole pack of enemies, it is to the eternal credit of the man that he held his own so stubbornly and so long. He was no degenerate last scion of a house whose fame had outlived its vitality, but a worthy descendant of the great Dungi. As he had faced the eastern menace, so he faced the western one. There was a *year when Martu, a force like a storm, that from of old had not known a city, bowed its neck to Ibi-Sin, king of Ur*. But the end was inevitable and could not be long delayed. Sooner or later, the Amorites in the west would join hands with the men of Elam and Anshan in the east and their combined forces would crack Sumer between them like a nut.

The leader of the Amorites was one Ishbi-Irra or Ishbi-Girra, prince of Mari, who seems to have been no inconsiderable strategist. A most important document in the University

THE AMORITE INVASION

Museum of Pennsylvania shows that, instead of striking directly at Ur, he first raided across Akkad from west to east and sought to establish himself in the neighbourhood of Kazallu beyond the Tigris, where he would be in touch with Elam. The document in question is nothing less than a letter from Ibi-Sin himself to Puzur-Numushda, *isag* of Kazallu. Unfortunately, the language of this text is so difficult and obscure that it is foolhardy to attempt a translation. All we can say is that it announces the despatch of a relieving-force to Kazallu and speaks of Ishbi-Irra as though he were going to or were already in 'the mountain', that is, in the Elamite foothills. *Ishbi-Irra is not of the seed of Sumer : he has not conceded to me my rightful overlordship.* So difficult was it for a great-grandson of Dungi to imagine that the centre of the world was anywhere but on his own doorstep !

The crash came—according to the chronological system that we are using—in 2187 B.C. How much or how little of Sumer proper by that time remained under the control of Ibi-Sin we cannot say. Akkad probably, and the eastern provinces certainly, were lost to him. Ishbi-Irra was in full alliance with the Elamites. The stars in their courses fought against Ur. Soothsayers, in after years, told how an unfavourable appearance of the constellation *Draco* foretold the ruin of *Ibi-Sin who went to Anshan in bonds, who mourned and fell*, whilst the birth of a strange monster—a lamb with two tails and shaped like an ox—was an omen of success for Ishbi-Irra. Nevertheless, it was not he but his eastern allies who struck the final blow, capturing Ur and Uruk at the point of the sword.

A late tradition tells us that the king of Elam at this time was one Kudur-Nahhunte. His army was probably similar to that of the exiled Negus of Abyssinia—a nucleus of well-armed and disciplined troops drawn from the civilized cities of his kingdom, backed by a huge mob of savage and semi-savage levies from the hills. The storm and sack of a great city is a detestable business under any circumstances, but when carried out by a horde of undisciplined and uncivilized Orientals, hot for plunder and savage to avenge defeat, it is something that is better not described. The famous mausoleum of Dungi and Bur-Sin, spoken of in the last chapter, bears testimony to the

FROM THE FALL OF UR TO THE RISE OF BABYLON

heaviness of the Elamite hand. Not only was its rich adornment of gold and semi-precious stones stripped from its walls, not only were the splendid statues that must have stood in it dethroned and carried away, their altars torn apart for the sake of the offerings concealed within them, but the very vaults of the dead were broken open, the bones of the last great rulers of Sumer cast into the fire or on to the dunghill, the grave-furniture which had surrounded them seized, and even the worthless earthen pots which had contained their store of meat and drink for the hereafter were smashed to fragments. So cunning were the plunderers to light on every spot, and only on those spots, which concealed treasure, so little time did they waste in soundings and useless searches, that one cannot doubt that the priests of the shrine were tortured till they revealed its secrets. Finally, the whole building was set on fire, and though its massive brick walls survived the flames, one may see on them to this day the smoke-blackening where the doors and woodwork blazed and dropped to ashes four thousand years ago.

Contemplating this havoc, which has deprived him of what might have been one of the greatest archæological discoveries since the War, the antiquary experiences a genuine satisfaction in reflecting that some 1,500 years later Ashurbânipal, king of Assyria—himself a student of the long-dead Sumerian tongue and a pious restorer of the temples of Sumer and Akkad—invaded Elam with a huge army and served Susa precisely as the Elamites had served Ur. *Mutatis mutandis*, his account—written in the detailed and realistic style which is characteristic of the Assyrian annals—of how he plundered and destroyed the city gives so clear a picture of what Ur must have suffered from Kudur-Nahhunte that it is worth quoting here.

I opened their treasures. What of silver, gold, chattels, goods was laid up in them, that which former kings of Elam even to the kings down to the present day had got together and deposited, whereon no other foe but I had laid his hands, I brought out from the midst and reckoned as spoil . . . I dismantled the ziggurat of Susa, built with a facing of lapis-lazuli coloured tiles ; desecrated its horns of bright molten copper. Shushinak, god of their oracles, who sat in secret, the fashion of whose godhead no man may behold . . . with nineteen other idols

THE AMORITE INVASION

and their priests . . . *I carried off to Assyria. Thirty-two statues of kings of molten gold, silver, copper, of limestone . . . I took to Assyria ; removed the colossi, guardians of the temples, as many as there were ; dragged out the bull-colossi, fearful divinities, belonging to the gateways. I ruined the shrines of Elam out of existence ; consigned its gods and goddesses to the wind. Into the midst of their secret groves, whose depths no stranger may penetrate, nor tread their bounds, my troops of war intruded. They looked upon their mystery ; burned it with fire. The sepulchres of their former and latter kings, who had not revered my lords Ashur and Ishtar, who had kept the kings, my fathers, at bay, I ruined, destroyed and laid open to the sun. I took their bones to Assyria and laid unrest upon their ghosts ; denied them offerings of food and libations of water.*

So, when the wheel had come full circle, it befell in Elam. Even if they could have foreseen it, it is not likely that the prospect of a vengeance delayed for fifteen centuries would have done much to comfort the unfortunate subjects of Ibi-Sin as they saw their temples and palaces go up in smoke, blood running in rivers through their streets, their children and—more horrible still to them, since it implied the departure from them of all luck or hope—their gods carried in captivity to a strange land and their mighty dead condemned, by the plundering of their sepulchres, to ‘unrest’ in the world below. The catastrophe was absolute. Ibi-Sin himself was, as noticed above, among the prisoners. He was taken to Anshan and there probably put to death. The Elamites made no attempt to hold what they had conquered. Satiated with blood and spoil, they returned to their mountains leaving Sumer and Akkad at the mercy of Ishbi-Irra and his half-savage tribesmen. In every plundered and desecrated temple of the land dirges of despair were composed and sung.

At Ur itself a solemn *Dies Iræ* was written, telling how the wrath of the god Enlil had been kindled against his people so that he ordered :

*a storm to ravage, to overthrow the established order,—
the storm like a whirlwind overturns its foundation !—
to destroy the shrines of Sumer,
to subvert the gracious rule in its temple,
to ruin the city, to ruin the temple,*

FROM THE FALL OF UR TO THE RISE OF BABYLON

*to ruin the stall, to ruin the fold . . .
to shut off his (the king's) house that wild thorns should grow there,
his gale, that doleful weeds should grow there. . . .*

There was great cause for lamentation. Never again, though it was to continue as an inhabited place for close upon two thousand years, though men would still walk under the shadow of its ruined *ziggurat* when Alexander the Great lay dead at Babylon, would Ur be a capital city. Its glory had departed from it forever, and with it had departed the glory of Sumer. After a thousand years of achievement and prosperity, the Sumerians saw themselves outnumbered in their own land. Akkad was completely Semitized already, the Amorite intruders mingling with the old Akkadian population. Sumerian was no longer spoken there. East of the Tigris, Amorites and Elamites between them possessed the land.

The victorious Ishbi-Irra had chosen as his headquarters the hitherto unimportant city of *Isin*,¹ 17 or 18 miles due south of Nippur and so well within the boundaries of Sumer proper. The ruins of this city (now called *Ishân Bahriyât*) cover about 200 acres. They have not been excavated. Nor was this the extent of the Amorite intrusion, for another chieftain, possibly an ally of Ishbi-Irra and Kudur-Nahhunte in the late wars, established himself in the important city of Larsam,² between Uruk and Ur, in the extreme south. This adventurer was called *Naplânûm* and he is reckoned by later chroniclers as the founder of the 'Dynasty of Larsam' which flourished contemporaneously with Ishbi-Irra's 'Dynasty of Isin'. The next two centuries of Babylonian history are called accordingly by archæologists the *Isin-Larsam Period*.

2. *Isin and Larsam*

Ishbi-Irra and *Naplânûm* died in the fullness of time and were succeeded on their respective thrones by their sons *Gimil-Ilishu* and *Emisum*. Some light has been shed on this obscure

¹ Formerly misread *Nisin*.

² More often, but less correctly, read *Larsa*.

period by the Oriental Institute of Chicago's excavations at the ancient city of Eshnunna (Tell Asmar). Here, it appears, the Elamite conquerors of Ur installed a member of their own race, by name Kirikiri, as ruler over all that land east of the Tigris which had been called since early times 'the land of Warum'. Of Kirikiri's son, Bilalama or Billama, a good deal is known. He married his daughter Mekubi to Dan-Ruhurati, *isag* of Susa (which city, of course, now owed allegiance to the kings of Elam) and built himself a palace at Eshnunna which has been excavated. A fine lapis-lazuli cylinder-seal presented to him by his father, Kirikiri, has been discovered. Moreover, Dr. Frankfort, who has made a special study of the date-formulæ used at Eshnunna during this reign, has discovered five which have a great historical significance: *Year when Amurru made submission, year when Amurru destroyed Ka-Ibaum, year when Badbar and Ka-Ibaum were built, year when Amurru destroyed Ishur, year when Amurru entrusted Bilalama with the rule of Ishur*. Evidently the astute Bilalama entered into an arrangement with his fierce allies whereby they were to pillage and plunder cities in his neighbourhood and then hand them over to him for the enlargement of his dominions—a devil's bargain if ever there was one. We can imagine the miserable anarchy which succeeded the ordered peace of the III Dyn. of Ur throughout the length and breadth of Babylonia. Isin controlled Ur, Uruk, Nippur and Sippar (where fragments of an inscription of Idin-Dagan, grandson of Ishbi-Irra, have been found). Kazallu was probably independent. Ganhar, in the Kurdish hills, once a province of Dungi's empire, now boasted 'kings' of its own, and an inscribed seal giving the name of one of them, Kisâri, is preserved in the celebrated Collection de Clercq.

Bilalama of Eshnunna was succeeded by a certain Isharramashu in whose reign a catastrophe befell. The palace which Bilalama had built was burnt to the ground, Isharramashu disappeared from history, literally in a cloud of smoke, and his place was taken by one calling himself *Usurawasu, the delegate of Anumutabil, king of Der*. This Anumutabil has left us a short Akkadian inscription in which he claims to have defeated the armies of Anshan, Elam and Simash and conquered the land of Barahsi. Evidently, the Elamite confederation, helped by

FROM THE FALL OF UR TO THE RISE OF BABYLON

their old ally Eshnunna, had been trying to make more trouble in Babylonia and had received a most unexpected thrashing from this obscure prince of a frontier-town, who followed up his victory in the field by storming Eshnunna and setting his own governor over it.

Meanwhile, Sumer proper was recovering from the disaster of 2187. Savage and predatory as were the wandering bands of Amorites whom Bilalama had used to rake his chestnuts out of the fire, their cousins who had settled in Isin and Larsam were civilized enough already. Their ancestors had been under the influence of Sumerian culture for generations before the fall of Ur. Gimil-Ilishu (prob. 2153-2144 B.C.) son of the formidable Ishbi-Irra himself, has left copies of an inscription in good Sumerian at Ur. *For Nannar, the high and noble chief of the Anunnage, his king, the divine Gimil-Ilishu, the mighty man, king of Ur, when he had brought Nannar back from Anshan to Ur, built the Dublal-mah, his place of judgement . . .* This is one of the most important historical documents of the period. It shows us the son of the invader already apeing the manners of his new subjects, assuming the title of divinity like Dungi or Bur-Sin, rebuilding the temples which his Elamite allies had destroyed and restoring the divine statue of Nannar which Kudur-Nahhunte had raped away to Anshan, and which he probably had to pay heavily to recover.

His son, Idin-Dagan, carried on the good work, for among an important collection of copies of old texts, made by some antiquarian of the XX cent. B.C. and unearthed at Ur, were found transcripts of two dedications by *the divine Idin-Dagan, the mighty king, king of Ur, king of Sumer and Akkad* to the god Nannar, *who will not cast down the ravaged city, the lord shining in heaven alone, the eldest son of Enlil, who restores the ancient shrine.* Idin-Dagan was succeeded by his son Ishme-Dagan (prob. 2122-2103 B.C.) who calls himself in his inscriptions: *nourisher of Nippur, restorer of Ur, illuminator of Eridu, lord of Uruk, mighty king, king of Isin, king of Sumer and Akkad, beloved husband of the goddess Innina.* This titulary shows both the scope of his lordship and the deliberate fashion in which he imitated the style of the great kings of Ur. The readiness with which the family of Ishbi-Irra adopted the habits of the old kings of Sumer and

Akkad, and the fact that their names are less purely 'W. Semitic' than those of their contemporaries of Larsam, suggest that they were not of unmixed Amorite blood, but had an Akkadian strain in their ancestry.

Ishme-Dagan continued his grandfather's work of restoring the ancient gate-house and lawcourt at Ur, E-dublal-mah. He altered the character of this little building somewhat radically, blocking up its rear entrance and changing it from a gateway into a two-roomed chapel, possibly with a domed roof. His work was of an enduring character, for more than seven hundred years were to elapse before the sanctuary was restored again. He also carried out extensive building-operations at Nippur. But the most striking example of his conformity to ancient custom is the fact that he installed one of his sons at Ur as high-priest of Nannar, giving him the good old Sumerian name of Enannatum. Of this ecclesiastic we shall hear more in a moment.

Ishme-Dagan was succeeded by Libit-Ishtar, either his brother or more probably his son, a ruler who has left us several monuments. Inscriptions of his, in both Sumerian and Akkadian record the fact that he carried out legal reforms of some importance. On an amulet shaped like an eye, now in the private ownership of a lady in Connecticut, we read: *I am the divine Ishme-Dagan, king of Sumer and Akkad. When I had set justice in Sumer and Akkad, for my life I dedicated this object to the goddess Ninlil.* The same phrase appears in other inscriptions of his and in one of his year-dates. The kings of Isin had taken with enthusiasm to the old custom of emperor-worship. Many wordy hymns have been preserved in which they are identified with the dying and resurrected god of vegetation, Dumuzi, and are described as sons of Dagan, the Amorite god. The hymns from the cult of Libit-Ishtar are loud in praise of his reforms.

There can be no doubt that, under the rule of this enlightened king, Sumer enjoyed a certain return to the order and prosperity of the III Dyn. of Ur, a gleam of sunshine in the winter of her discontent. He conducted building-operations at Ur (in the neighbourhood of the *ziggurat*), at Isin and possibly at Nippur. It also appears that he installed one of his sons as

priest of Ninezen at Ur, where his brother (or nephew?) Enannatum already ministered to Nannar. Peace and riches were the blessings of his reign, yet like Urukagina, the reformer of old, his end was but desolation.

The Sumerians were, as we have said, now actually a minority in their own land. But they were a wealthy, intelligent and, we cannot doubt, bitterly dissatisfied minority. Some reaction against the rule of kings whom, however civilized and enlightened, they could only regard as interlopers was to be expected : and so far as we can interpret the scanty evidence available, it seems eventually to have been brought about actually with the help of compatriots of those kings. At any rate, there is a date-formula which must surely mark the end of the good king Libit-Ishtar's reign. It reads : *year when the Amorites drove Libit-Ishtar out*. The next ruler of Isin bears the uncompromisingly Sumerian name of Ur-Ninurta. It is hard to resist the conclusion that the Sumerian nationalists had hired some force of Amorite brigands (as Bilalama of Eshnunna had done) to do their dirty work for them and enable their leader Ur-Ninurta to achieve a *coup-d'état*. There is nothing surprising—to anyone who is acquainted with Oriental politics—in the idea of the Sumerians hiring one body of their national enemies against another. Of course, some other explanation of the facts is feasible. Libit-Ishtar may have been deposed by his own followers. What is certain is that the year 2091 B.C.—according to our reckoning—saw a Sumerian ruler on the throne of Isin.

Probably a little earlier than this, another Sumerian, Ur-Ninmar, had made himself master of Eshnunna and the land of Warum, despite the fact that the population of that region must, by now, have been almost exclusively a mixture of Elamite and Semite. He evidently had a long and fairly prosperous reign, for he had time and money enough first to restore the old palace at Eshnunna, which had been destroyed by Anumutabil of Der, and then on second thoughts to build a new one of his own. All things considered, there are definite signs of a swing of the political pendulum having taken place everywhere in favour of the Sumerians.

But there remained one power in Babylonia which was wholly

unaffected—save in so far as it was strengthened—by this reaction. It will be remembered that an Amorite chief called Naplânûm had founded an independent dynasty at Larsam in the extreme south of Sumer. His first three descendants, Emisum, Samum and Zabai, passed their lives in profound and indolent obscurity and have not left us so much as an inscription to remember them by. The fifth king, Gungunum, was made of different stuff. He came to the throne probably in 2094 B.C., just at the end of Libit-Ishtar's reign. A brother or nephew of the latter, it will not have been forgotten, was high-priest at Ur in those days. Being a person of some importance, and of the literary turn of mind proper to an ecclesiastic, he has recorded some of his actions for our benefit. On inscribed clay cones found at Ur he says that : *for the life of Gungunum, the mighty man, king of Ur, Enannatum, the bridal-priest of Nannar (?) , chief priest of Nannar, son of the divine Ishme-Dagan, king of Sumer and Akkad, has built a temple for Babbar the sun-god of Larsam.* Here is an odd state of affairs—the son of one king of Isin who had done much for Ur, and brother of a second one, giving the title of 'king of Ur' to a ruler of Larsam ! The explanation must certainly be that Gungunum had taken advantage of the troubles at the end of Libit-Ishtar's reign quietly to annex Ur, and that Enannatum, feeling that he had more in common with him than with the upstart Ur-Ninurta, had anticipated the Vicar of Bray by some thirty-eight centuries and determined that whatsoever king might reign still he'd be the high-priest of Nannar. Ur-Ninurta, stamped bricks of whose time have been found at Nippur, continued, somewhat pathetically, to call himself *shepherd of Ur, who purely carries on the cult of Eridu* and to write the sign for *god* before his name. In reality, his claim to the one distinction was about as substantial as to the other.

For the reigns of Gungunum and his successors we are fortunate in possessing a nearly complete list of year-dates. The third and fifth years of Gungunum himself were *year when Bashimi was conquered* and *year when Anshan was conquered*. The 'conquest' of Anshan was probably only the repulse of a raiding-party which had crossed the Tigris. The Elamites were a continual menace to Babylonia at this time. The plunder of Ur and Uruk had not sated them, nor had their

defeat at the hands of Anumutabil taught them good manners. They no longer regarded the Amorites as allies, probably feeling—not unjustifiably—that Ishbi-Irra and Naplânûm had bested them in the bargain over the division of Ibi-Sin's empire. For the moment, Larsam had proved too strong for them, but about a century hence they were destined to put a notable spoke in the Amorite wheel.

The tenth year of the reign of Gungunum was that in which he *brought the two sacred emblems* (whatever they were) *into the temple of Nannar*, so that he must have gained control of Ur before—but probably not long before—that date. Many offerings to Nannar are recorded in subsequent date-formulæ, including the building of a treasury and the presentation of a silver statue. Ur, indeed, was in fair way to recover, if not her former pre-eminence, at least something of her former prosperity. The powerful priest, Enannatum, rebuilt that large and labyrinthine temple of Bur-Sin's time, the E-gepar-ku, reverently replacing the inscribed memorial-stones of its founder which had been thrown down and defaced by the Elamites. His building, which was composed of burnt brick instead of Bur-Sin's shoddy *libn*, was found by the excavators in a fair state of preservation. Burial-vaults, probably of the priests and priestesses, underlay certain of its rooms but had been comprehensively plundered in antiquity. A small and broken diorite statuette of the goddess Ningal, wife of Nannar, with an inscription to the effect that it had been dedicated to her in 'her noble house' by Enannatum, was found in a vestry opening off the principal shrine. Though executed with considerable technical skill, it is so uncompromisingly hideous that one does not regret the damage it has sustained.

Gungunum's remaining years were divided between works of piety and necessity, the latter represented by the digging of canals and the construction of forts. He was gathered to his undistinguished fathers in probably 2067 B.C. and Abisârê succeeded him. His first years were as his father's last ones. He continued to act kindly toward Ur, dedicating to Nannar a silver statue and another adorned with lapis and cornelian. In his ninth year, however, something considerably more exciting happened. *The army of Isin was smitten with the sword.*

A quarrel had been inevitable ever since Gungunum 'jumped' Ur. The Sumerian king of Isin, Ur-Ninurta, had died in 2064 B.C. and was succeeded by a son to whom he had given the name—evocative of old Sumerian glories—Bur-Sin II. This king did some building at Nippur, using stamped bricks on which he claims the same imaginary dominion as his father. Presumably he made the mistake of trying to substantiate these claims by force of arms, and was repulsed. Ur remained under the control of Larsam.

The successor of Abisarê was Suwu-Illum or Sumu-Illum (prob. 2056–2028 B.C.) who also signalized his accession by dedicating a silver statue, this time to the sun-god Babbar of Larsam. It seems to have been the custom at this date—and no doubt it was wholly approved of by the priesthood—for each new king to place an image of precious metal in some temple after his coronation. Suwu-Illum, having fulfilled his ceremonial duty and added two copper images of lions for Innina as a make-weight, turned his attention from faith to works. In his fourth year he defeated Kazallu, which lay beyond the Tigris, just south of Eshnunna, and was now an independent Amorite state. This victory made him master of the district of Akuz, and four years later a town called Kaidda, probably on the Gulf coast, fell into his hands. Evidently his attempted expansion aroused opposition from the princes of Akkad, for in his twelfth year he had occasion to *smite the army of Kish with the sword*, and then, after eight more years of peace, to fight against Kazallu again.

The mention of war with Kish is interesting, as the Akkadian inscriptions of a certain Ashdunierim, 'king' of that once powerful city, may very likely refer to this. *When the Four Quarters were at odds with me, eight years I waged war and in the eighth year, verily, my opponent returned for my overthrow. Verily, my army had been reduced to three hundred. Then came the god Ilbaba, my lord, my gracious aid, and the goddess Ishtar, my lady, my well-wisher. I took food for my sustenance and went a whole day on the march. In forty days I brought the hostile land into submission indeed. Verily I built the great wall of Kish anew.* The 'opponent' spoken of may quite well be Suwu-Illum, though we know that Ashdunierim also fought against an otherwise unknown person,

Imgur-Ishtar. The defeat which Kish, aided by Ilbaba and Ishtar, was eventually able to inflict on him would not, of course, be mentioned in Suwu-Illum's chronicles.

The above record of petty squabbling shows how swiftly Babylonia was dropping back into the old miserable anarchy from which the wisdom of Ishme-Dagan and Libit-Ishtar had shown promise of rescuing her. The Sumerian dichards at Isin must be confessed—however much one may sympathize with their desire to put back the clock—to have been incapable imbeciles. The Amorites of Larsam were stronger, but not strong enough to control even the whole of Sumer; whilst in Akkad and the eastern provinces, as we have seen, independent rulers were as common—and about as useful—as fleas on a dog's back. But a new power was driving root now in the land and, in the fullness of time, would spread its branches and gather all the jangling city-states beneath their shadow.

It was probably in the year 2057 B.C., that is while Abisarê was ending his days in Larsam and the boastfully-named Bur-Sin II was on the throne of Isin, that a man with the pure Amorite name of Suwu-abum or Sumu-abum made himself master of an unimportant Akkadian city, about 9 miles west of Kish, which the Sumerians called Kadingirra and the Akkadians Bab-Ilim, 'the Gate of God',—a name which, as Hebrew Babel or Greek Babylon, is as familiar to us to-day as that of Athens or of Rome. The early history of this little town is dubious, though it is mentioned in records of the Dyn. of Agade. The local god was as undistinguished, hitherto, as his city. He was Asarludug or *Marduk*,¹ the son of Enki, and seems to have been originally a god of the waters under the earth, though he also had features in common with the demon-slaying Ninurta. A century later he was to be, and to remain, the most important deity in the whole pantheon of Babylonia.

It is curious that the appearance in history of one of the two powers which was in future to control the destinies of el-'Irâq should coincide as closely as it does with the rise to importance of the other and older one. The German excavations carried on before the War at the city of Ashur have brought to light a number of inscriptions, belonging to this age,

¹ Biblical *Merodach*.

ASHUR

in which we can trace the growing prosperity of the now independent state of Assyria. This material is full enough and interesting enough to deserve a section to itself, so that we may bid a short farewell to the kings of Larsam, Isin and Babylon, leaving them tugging like jackals at the dismembered carcass of the empire of Ur and growling suspiciously at each other between mouthsful, and give our full attention to it.

3. *Ashur*

There is no reason to suppose that either the Amorites or the Elamites, on the fall of Ur, managed to make themselves masters of Ashur. But in the period which we are about to consider there were evidently Amorites settled in and about the city, intermingled with the already mixed local population, for the cults of the W. Semitic gods Adad and Dagon were established there, side-by-side with those of the Assyrian Ashur and the pre-Assyrian mother-goddess, now generally called by her Akkadian name of Ishtar. We have already seen (in Chapter III) that the settlement of the Assyrians on the Tigris drove a wedge into the older population of Mesopotamia, the 'far-flung Shubarians', separating this nation into an eastern and a western group. The western branch, who occupied the high steppe of ed-Jezîrch, between the upper reaches of the Tigris and Euphrates, as well as the valleys of the Khabûr and Balikh rivers and the mountainous country round the sources of the Tigris,¹ were known as the Hurri or Harri. These played a not inconsiderable part in the later history of the middle East.

The list of Assyrian rulers which modern historians have been able to reconstruct from their own monuments and from ancient chronicles begins with the name of Puzur-Ashir ² I who, according to the most likely chronology, must have ruled from 2086 to 2072 B.C., that is, in the days of Gungunum of Larsam and Ur-Ninurta and Bur-Sin II of Isin. His son, Shalimahum (prob. 2071-2054 B.C.) appears to have refounded the temple

¹ See Map I.

² The name of the city and the god Ashur was so spelt at this early time.

of Ashur, originally built by the mysterious Aushpia in the dark ages,¹ for the Germans found a fragmentary inscription of his set in the oldest stone foundations of that building. Stone was, of course, easily come by in Assyria and was used in all structures of importance. Some thirteen centuries hence, the Assyrian kings were to decorate their marvellous palaces with the finest stone sculptures ever produced in the middle East.

With Ilushuma, son of Shalimahum (prob. 2057-2040 B.C.), the contemporary of Suwu-abum of Babylon, we find ourselves back in the main channel of 'Irâqi history. This was a prince of metal. His fathers, content with their new-found independence, had been only thankful that no one should interfere with them : but Ilushuma saw the helpless condition of Babylonia and decided that something was to be gained from it. On an inscribed brick now in the British Museum he tells us how he repaired the ancient temple of Ishtar, and adds : *The liberty of the Akkadians, and of their sons likewise, have I established . . . for Ur and Nippur, Awal and Kismar, Der of the goddess Kadi (?) , as far as the city of Ashur, I have established their liberty.* Now the city *Awal* is the same as Awan on the east of the Tigris, and *Der*, as we know, was in that district also, as was probably Kismar. There is nothing very astonishing in the idea of a prince of Ashur exercising authority in this region. But Nippur was held by the kings of Isin (for what they were worth) and Ur, in the extreme south of Babylonia, belonged to Larsam. The Assyrian word for *liberty* used in this text has a particular meaning, *freedom from conscripted labour*, and this suggests that Ilushuma was claiming to have insured that the kings of Isin and Larsam should not force the Akkadians to do boon-work, such as digging canals or mending roads, in future. Again, what is meant here by 'Akkadians' ? They may have been the descendants of freemen whom the kings of Agade had settled (as was their custom) on estates for which the new rulers were now forcing them to do feudal service : or since the Sumerians and Akkadians were now hardly distinguishable from one another, the word may simply stand for the old population of Babylonia as opposed to the newly-arrived Amorites. In any event, what most probably happened was

¹ See Ch. V.

that some old-established element of the population of Babylonia appealed to the ruler of Ashur to free them from local tyranny ; that he—seeing some substantial advantage for himself in it—marched south and forced the rulers of Sumer and Akkad to promise reforms ; and that in the process he came into collision with Suwu-abum of Babylon. This last is suggested by a single line (the only one preserved) of a Babylonian chronicle which reads tantalizingly : *Ilushuma, king of Ashur, in the reign of Su(wu)-abum . . .* It was the first hint of the paramount rôle which Assyria was eventually to play in the affairs of el-'Irâq, an early rehearsal for that great day when a king of Babylon was to be led naked and in chains through the streets of Ashur.¹

Ilushuma's son and successor, Irishum I, was an important ruler who has left us numerous records of his works. Reigning probably from 2039 to 2019 B.C., he improved and enlarged the temple of Ashur, and the solid stone walls with which he surrounded it were found in good preservation by the excavators. It also seems that he built houses along the city-wall, *from the Cattle-Gate as far as the Folk-Gate*. The Cattle-Gate is, according to the excavators, the same as the great fortified entrance which was afterward called the Coppersmith's Gate. Ashur was no longer a petty township, a mere fortified village, but a city. Irishum, who was evidently a benevolent prince, freed his people from customs-duties on metal and wool. He also founded a temple to Adad and built the grand processional staircase which rose from the bank of the Tigris up to the temple of Ashur and which remains a striking monument to this day.

All these achievements point to a notable increase in the prosperity of the little state of Assyria, and the reason for this prosperity is not far to seek. Ashur is, in a sense, the northern gateway of Babylonia. Past this low bluff upon the Tigris runs the great trade-route to northern Syria and Asia Minor. No longer subject to the emperors of Ur, Ashur was now legitimately entitled to take toll of the constant traffic passing

¹ This happened in about, 1242 B.C. The Babylonian king was Kash-tiliash III and the Assyrian that great warrior Tukulti-Ninurta I. See Smith, *Early History of Assyria*, Ch. XVII.

from north to south. The reader will not have forgotten that, as early as the time of Sargon of Agade, a colony of traders who were obviously the nearest relatives of the Assyrians was established in the district of Ganesh (mod. Kül-Tepe) in Cappadocia and was enjoying extensive trade-connections with Babylonia. This colony was yet—some five centuries later—in existence ; but there is evidence that it was now their cousins of Assyria with whom its merchants trafficked. Ashur had become a market, and it was probably as much by his commercial as by his military authority that Ilushuma was able to dictate to the rulers of the South.

The successors of Irishum I, Ikunum, Sharrukên I (the name is the same as that of the great king of Agade), Puzur-Ashir II and Ahi-Ashir, are obscure and unimportant. The last of them probably ended his reign in 1944 B.C. In his time, and in that of his immediate predecessors, there had been a revival in Babylonian politics, as we shall see presently, and this had the effect of reducing the power and prosperity of the Assyrians. Even their liberty, indeed, was lost for a while ; but the feet of the nation were set upon the upward ladder and, despite temporary reverses, it would climb on.

4. *The Coming Struggle*

Whatever was the nature of Ilushuma's interference in the affairs of Babylonia, it did nothing to alter the current of events there. Suwu-abum, founder of the *I. Dyn. of Babylon*, would certainly have agreed with the German proverb that says : ' When two fall out the third rejoices.' The rivalry of Isin and Larsam made it almost too easy for him to carve out a kingdom for himself among the cities of Akkad. Having fortified his capital with a great wall, he proceeded to annex the two neighbouring cities of Kibalbarrum and Dilbat. So far as we know, no one tried to stop him. Bur-Sin II, who was still on the throne of Isin, was a peculiarly feeble specimen of his race, and Larsam as yet had no pretensions so far north. Having gone thus far, Suwu-abum wisely rested on his laurels for a space. In his tenth year, so his date-formulæ tell us, he dedicated a

THE COMING STRUGGLE

crown in the temple of An at Kish. This does not mean that he had added this city to his dominions. On the contrary, this event falls just two years before the smiting of Kish by Suwu-Illum of Larsam and is probably an indication that Ashdunierim (if he was really king of Kish at this time) had made alliance with his new neighbour of Babylon against the menace from the south. It is obvious that the eyes of both Suwu-abum and Suwu-Illum were turned in the same direction—the no-man's-land along the Tigris. Suwu-Illum, as we saw above, fought twice against Kazallu, once near the beginning of his reign and once toward its end. Between these two campaigns—probably in the year 2045 B.C.—Suwu-abum of Babylon also made war on that state.

Suwu-abum died in 2043 B.C. and was succeeded by his son Suwu-la-Illum (not to be confused with Suwu-Illum of Larsam!), the early years of whose reign were devoted to the improvement of his city, though his third year has the mysterious and dramatic title, *year when Halambu was slain with the sword*. This otherwise unknown offender was probably some local bandit. Then, in about 2031 B.C., the new king turned suddenly on his father's ally of Kish, assaulted and annexed it. This happened four years after Suwu-Illum of Larsam's war against Kazallu, when the former had been twenty-six years on the throne and probably was too old for fighting. It was now Babylon that attacked the Amorite prince of Kazallu, Yahzir-El (who had apparently induced Kish to revolt), and defeated him in a pitched battle. Yahzir-El lived to fight another day, but was finally sent to join the dubious Halambu, probably in 2020 B.C. Altogether, Suwu-la-Illum's reign saw a great increase in the prosperity and importance of Babylon. He added, by means which we can no longer follow, the important city of Kutha (mod. Tell Ibrahīm, unexcavated) to his dominions. At the time of his death, which took place in about 2007 B.C., Babylon was the unquestioned mistress of the greater part of Akkad.

In Sumer, Nur-Adad had succeeded Suwu-Illum of Larsam, probably in 2027 B.C. The last years of his predecessor had been troublous, for in what is probably his earliest inscription Nur-Adad says that *when he had rejoiced the heart of Ur and turned*

out from thence the malignant Na'id-Shamash, had strengthened the foundations of Larsam's throne and brought the people's obedience back again, he rebuilt E-nunmah, the ancient and sacred double temple of the moongod and his wife. Evidently Ur and probably other dominions had fallen off from Larsam during Suwullum's old age. The 'malignant Na'id-Shamash' was doubtless some brigand who had established himself in Ur, very much as a Chinese 'general' of the last decade, with his riff-raff of uniformed cut-throats, would throw himself into a fortified city and hold it to ransom. Indeed, the state of Sumer and Akkad at the end of the XXI cent. B.C. strongly resembled that of modern China, with Elam, as we shall see in a moment, ready to play the part of Japan.

Nur-Adad was apparently an active and intelligent ruler. He rebuilt the holy *ziggurat* of Enki at Eridu, and his inscribed bricks, found there by Dr. R. Campbell Thompson, tell us how *in Eridu, after it had been destroyed aforetime, he established a reign of justice.* Eridu is only a morning's ride from Ur. It may very well have been sacked by Kudur-Nahhunte and his Elamites in 2187 B.C. and left uncared for ever since. The interest Nur-Adad took in this extreme south-western corner of his dominion suggests that he was beginning to feel pressure from the north and east. At present, with Babylon and Kazallu at embittered hand-grips, the danger was not great. But let one so far get the upper hand that it could dictate the policy and control the resources of the other, and the kings of Larsam would be wearing shoes that pinched.

Isin, again, lying as it does in almost the precise middle of Sumer, formed at the moment an extremely useful buffer-state; but should it once fall to one of the rulers of the North, it would be simply a pistol pointed at the head of Larsam. Neither side, in fact, could afford to see it absorbed by the other, and to this alone it owed its independence. Its position was that of Belgium in 1914.

Internally, it had become a kingdom of comic opera. Bur-Sin II had been succeeded in turn by Libit-Illil and Irra-Imitti. This latter, according to subsequent tradition, liked his dignities so little that he finally abdicated, of his own will, in favour of a certain gardener or farm-hand called Illil-bâni.

Situated as he was, between the upper and the nether millstone, his action is understandable. Illil-bâni the gardener, who appears to have exchanged the shovel for the sceptre in about 2029 B.C., actually left an inscription, unearthed at Nippur, in which he calls himself 'king of Sumer and Akkad' (save the mark!) and claims to have *built the wall of Isin*.

During his reign, probably in 2011 B.C., Nur-Adad of Larsam was succeeded by his son Sin-idinam. The remains of a very massive building of uncertain purpose, erected by this latter king, were excavated on the outskirts of Ur by Mr. M. E. L. Mallowan. Sin-idinam appears to have been the last really able king of the family of Gungunum. In an inscription coming probably from the city of Adab, he congratulates himself on having been endowed by the gods with intelligence to frustrate rebellion—a certain indication that he, like his father, was faced with troubles on his accession—and adds : *Indeed I have provided waters of everlastingness, unceasing prosperity, for my land of Larsam. When I dug the river Tigris, the big river, each man had X gur of grain, 2 qa of bread, 4 qa of beer, 2 shekels of oil, each day as wage. No man got more, no man less. By the strong arm of my land I carried out this task.* The above represents, in commodities, a very fair living wage in a country where unskilled labour can still be hired for 1s. 6d. a day. The inscription has a further interest because it shows us Sin-idinam in control of Adab, actually north-east of Isin, and able to run a canal from thence to the Tigris. His inscriptions also tell us that he completed his father's works at Ur and Eridu and rebuilt the famous sun-temple at Larsam, at that time certainly the richest shrine in Babylonia; and further : *that habitations of peace might be inhabited in his land, that happiness might abide among his far-flung peoples, that the land might rehearse the fame of his kingship until distant days, in his strength he mightily built the great wall of Badtibarra. Sin-idinam, shepherd of righteousness, has been pleasant to the hearts of the gods Utu and Dumuzi. May the days of his rule not be subverted for ever!*

The note of fear is very audible in these sentences. Strong walls and the favour of the gods would both be needed if Larsam was to hold her own. Sin-idinam, with his frequently emphasized solicitude for his people's welfare and his pride in

having paid his canal-diggers good wages, typifies the new humanist and idealist spirit which, paradoxically, this bloody and contentious age was to bring forth. But his righteousness did not avail him. His last year (probably 2006 B.C.) was also the first year of Zambiya, successor to Illil-bâni the gardener, of Isin. Its date is : *year when he smote the army of Elam, and Zambiya king of Isin, with the sword*. That a king of Isin would, of his own initiative, attack Larsam is not to be believed. Elam had, for reasons of policy, revived the old alliance ; was using Zambiya as a catspaw. Sin-idinnam may have been killed in battle. With his death, Larsam enters upon a period of decline.

Babylon, too, had paused for breath in her long march toward supremacy. Zabum (prob. 2007-1993 B.C.) and Awil-Sin (1993-1975), the next successors of Suwu-la-Ilum, were undistinguished kings. The former did some building at Sippar (mod. Tell Abu-Hubba), the ancient Akkadian city of the sun-god, which had passed into Babylonian hands some time ago, and the latter reconstructed the temple of Nergal, E-Meslam, the ' House of Hades ', at Kutha.

In the south, Sin-idinnam of Larsam was followed first by Sin-eribam and then by Sin-iqisham. The latter had no more sense than to congest with a treasure of fourteen gold and silver statues the already over-wealthy temple of the sun. Considering the state of the times, such a blatant piece of exhibitionism was suicidal. As is not infrequently the case in history, the foolishness of the father was visited on the son. The year 1998 B.C. (according to the chronology used here) should have been the first full regnal year of Sili-Adad, last ruler of the line of Gungunum. Instead, it is called *year when Sili-Adad departed from the kingship*. This formula seems to cover a most curious state of affairs. We know, from a source that will be considered in a moment, that during the few months' reign of Sili-Adad, Larsam, so long the most powerful city in Babylonia, was seized and sacked by the unruly Amorites of Kazallu—free at the moment from the rule of Babylon—who paid particular attention to the sun-temple, E-barra, with its precious images. We also know that city and temple were strictly and instantly avenged by a most unexpected champion who afterward placed

his own son on the throne. Sili-Adad was not killed. He may have fled before the Amorites or he may voluntarily have abdicated as the price of the newcomer's assistance.

This newcomer was Kudur-Mabug, a member of the royal family of Elam, and one of the oddest characters in Sumerian history. In his inscriptions he never uses the title 'king' or *isag*, but calls himself modestly *Patriarch* (*adda*, lit. *father*) of the Amorite land, son of *Simitishilhak*; or else *Patriarch of Emutbal*. Emutbal was a general name for the east bank of the Tigris, and this proves that it was only the Amorite tribes of that region and not (as some historians have supposed) the original Amorite land in Syria over which Kudur-Mabug claimed authority. In an inscription found at Ur, he tells us how :—*When Nannar had responded to my prayer and had delivered into my hand the enemies who had razed the summit of E-barra, verily I brought back the cities of Mashganshabra and Karra-Utu to Larsam. Nannar, thou art my king. Thou hast done it! I, what am I? Because of this thing* (he repaired the temple E-nunmah for Nannar) *for my life and for the life of my son Warad-Sin, king of Larsam . . . Because of my work, may Nannar, my king, rejoice over me. A destiny of life, a good reign, a throne of firm foundation, may he give me for a gift. The dear shepherd of Nannar may I be, and may my days be long!* There is a flavour of genuine piety and most welcome humility in the above. Kudur-Mabug would appear to have been a sincerely modest and unambitious man. Having—probably in a single campaign—punished the plunderers of Larsam and repaired some of the damage they had done, he seems to have been content to retire to his Elamite principality (whose whereabouts we do not know) and leave his eldest son on the throne, controlling a territory as wide as Suwu-Ilum had done. One sees him go with something like regret. It would be pleasant to know more about him.

All this must have come as a rude shock to the kings of Babylon who foresaw that in the event of any trouble occurring between them and the Elamite dynasty at Larsam, the latter would be able to raise not only Sumer but the whole Tigris valley, and the hill-country east of it, against them. Prudently, they did nothing for a while, even when Warad-Sin, abandoning the old tacit agreement to respect the neutrality of Isin,

struck the death-blow to that tottering state by wresting from it the holy city of Nippur. The attack drove Isin into the arms of Babylon, but it also deprived it of its last vestige of importance, rendering it an ally barely worth while having.

As a whole, Warad-Sin's reign was both prosperous and peaceful. The rule of the Elamite kings of Larsam was, indeed, the Indian Summer of Sumerian culture. Ur and Larsam, especially, regained much of that brilliant opulence which they had enjoyed under the god-emperors of the last Dynasty of Ur. Offerings of gold and silver continued to pour into their temples, but now there was likewise a strong government to ensure that the gods might peacefully enjoy their own. As is often the case in the autumn of a great civilization, the period was one of intense literary activity. The ancient chronicles, the sacred rituals and stories were busily re-edited and cast into their final form. Copies of old historical inscriptions were made, and these sometimes prove useful to the historian to-day. The art of the period was not brilliant, it is true. Sumerian sculpture had declined miserably in the centuries after Gudea and Ur-Nammu; nor is the pottery conspicuous for its beauty. But architecture flourished; and some large painted figures of terra-cotta from Ur show both taste and skill. The style of the many long royal inscriptions which have survived is pure and classical.

The people were content, or had good reason to be. At Ur, two large residential quarters, one lying south-west and the other north-east of the temple area, have been excavated. Their main levels date from the last years of the Isin-Larsam period, and from them we can gather a certain amount of information about the life of the citizens. Some of the houses, judged by the contents of the tombs which underlay them and of the written documents that were found in the rooms, belonged to persons of consideration. Yet it must be admitted that, compared with the ancient people of India, the citizens of Ur lived in a state approaching squalor. Their houses were usually of burnt brick up to a certain height and of crude *libn* above. Most of them had an upper storey and all were constructed round a rectangular courtyard under whose pavement was an *impluvium* drain, a shaft for carrying off winter rain-

THE COMING STRUGGLE

water and the like. Opening off the court on the opposite side to the front-door was generally a long shallow room which may possibly have corresponded to the *iwan* or reception-room of a modern Arab house. Also on the ground floor and sometimes adjoining the *iwan*, was the curious room which must almost certainly have served as a domestic chapel. There is evidence that the downstairs doorways were occasionally arched and that the upper rooms opened (as is always the case in the modern East) upon a veranda supported on wooden posts and encircling the courtyard. The walls would seem to have been plastered with mud and whitewashed, and since no trace of windows was discovered the houses must, from the street, have presented a very dull and uniform appearance. Withinsides, however, the walls of at least the *iwan* were probably hung with such gay tapestries as Babylonia was famous for producing.

A large house would be about 40 ft. square as against the 50 or 60 ft. of the better-class houses of Mohenjo-Daro, whilst the streets, or rather alleys, along which they stood were seldom more than 6 ft. in width—the main streets of the Indus cities having a width of anything up to 34 ft. Of systematic town-planning, such as was practised at Babylon about a century later and in India some five centuries earlier, there is not a trace. The streets zigzag vaguely, widening and narrowing like a string of sausages, and frequently terminating in dead-ends. Open shops, similar to the minute dogholes in which the modern Arab tradesman dozes above his fly-specked wares, the wayside chapels already mentioned, a bakehouse with brick ovens and a large house which may possibly have been a *khan* or inn were the only buildings found not of strictly private character.

The condition of the streets must have rivalled or outdone that of the most fetid Arab *sugs* of to-day. The splendid municipal drainage-system of Mohenjo-Daro had no counterpart at Ur, where lavatories were infrequent and bathrooms and public sewers unknown, so that all domestic filth must have been flung casually out of doors to breed disease—a fact which is proved by the frequent raising of doorsills and floors to keep pace with the rising level of the street without. A still graver

menace to public health was the universal and revolting custom of domestic burial. Since very early times the habit of putting away members of the household, as they died, beneath the very floor of the house had flourished side-by-side with the more civilized one of disposing of them in cemeteries. In those cases where a regular family vault existed beneath the pavement of the domestic chapel, this state of affairs was not absolutely incompatible with health ; but all too often the corpses were shovelled casually away under the floor, at a depth of about a foot or so, with results better imagined than described. The burial-customs of the period vary considerably in detail. In the vaults, which are not much larger than a good-sized dog-kennel, the corpse was laid on the floor in a flexed position, the bones of previous occupants having been kicked unceremoniously aside to make room for it. Where there was no vault, a shallow grave was dug and the body placed in it in a contracted attitude. It might be covered by a curious lid of earthenware, shaped something like a dishcover and called technically a *larnax*, or by a fragment of a great jar, or simply wrapped in matting ; or it might be crammed into two great vases joined mouth-to-mouth, or even into a single vase whose proportions recall the story of the Forty Thieves. Beads, copper or silver bracelets, anklets and finger-rings and, more rarely, engraved cylinder-seals and small crescent-shaped gold earrings were worn in death as they had been in life. The grave-goods consisted primarily of plain clay pots and bowls and, less commonly, alabaster cosmetic-pots, copper tools and weapons or stone weights. There is evidence that when a family moved house the ancestral remains were exhumed and carried with them : but the cult of the dead was losing its importance in el-'Irâq as the Sumerians became absorbed by the Akkadians and the Amorites : for until the rise of Muhammad the Prophet a gloomy and indifferent attitude to the hereafter, a scepticism as to the efficacy of either prayers or offerings to aid the dead, was one of the characteristics of the Semitic religious outlook, finding its completest expression in the despairing cry of Ecclesiastes : *A living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die : but the dead know not anything.*

Such were the conditions under which the subjects of Warad-

Sin of Larsam lived and died. The sordid alleys and the packed whitewashed houses which, like the whitewashed sepulchres of Scripture, were full within of rottenness and dead men's bones, present a grisly picture to modern eyes ; but anyone who has visited the rare Arab towns—Arbîl, for example, in el-'Irâq or Moulay Idrîss in French Morocco—where Western ideas of housing and sanitation have as yet found no foothold, is aware that a contaminated water-supply and streets running with liquid sewage are not really incompatible with a cheerful and even comfortable way of life—at any rate, until an epidemic comes along. Ur, Larsam and Uruk were prosperous and well-governed cities in the XX cent. B.C., and their inhabitants certainly saw nothing deplorable in a state of affairs which would have made a modern Anglo-Saxon or an ancient Indian clap his hand to his nose and call down fire from heaven to cleanse the place.

Warad-Sin's most important building-work was carried on at Uruk which, though still the greatest city of Sumer, had been much neglected during the reigns of the earlier kings of Larsam. In an inscription now in the Yale Collection, he tells us that he rebuilt its famous wall whose foundation dated back beyond the days of the semi-mythical Gilgamesh, benefited and restored E-Anna, the venerable temple of the mother-goddess, dug the canals afresh and saw that the sacred festivals were observed. Ur, which for a century had been the second capital of the Larsam kingdom, also attracted his attention. He repaired the great city-wall of Ur-Nammu and fortified the *ziggurat* platform with a small mud-brick keep which had an ornamental façade decorated with pilasters. Further, his inscriptions tell us, he repaired the temples of Ningal, Inanna and Nergal and *because he delivered my enemy into my hand, in my piety I built for the god Ilbaba, lord of my good luck, his temple in the midst of Ur*. We do not know who the enemy was or why Warad-Sin attributed his success to Ilbaba, the god of Kish. This king frequently calls himself *restorer of Lagash and Girsu* and also claims to have paid respect to Eridu, so that all the five really great temples of Southern Babylonia were the richer by him. Such were not the attentions that former Elamite intruders had been accustomed to pay the shrines of Sumer :

but there is abundant evidence that the family of Kudur-Mabug was an exceptionally gifted and enlightened one.

The date-formulæ of Warad-Sin are incomplete. They record only one military expedition—the inevitable battle against Kazallu which every king of Larsam had to fight. His rule of twelve years saw a political and cultural revival in the South, and also a simplification of the whole question of the sovereign power in Babylonia, which was reduced now to an issue between Larsam and Babylon. With his death, probably in 1985 B.C., and the accession of his brilliant and courageous younger brother, Rim-Sin, the stage was cleared for the last act in the long tragedy of the Sumerian race.

5. *The Triumph of Babylon*

Rim-Sin, the new king of Larsam, is without any question amongst the most remarkable figures of Babylonian history. The sixty-one years of his long reign were the period of a struggle between the old and the new order which we watch with curiously divided sympathies. On the one hand, we have the young and splendidly vigorous and constructive power of the Amorite dynasty at Babylon, destined to leave a mark on human history as significant and as enduring as that left by any house of kings; on the other, the old Sumerian tradition of Southern 'Irâq, now fighting its last fight under the strange captaincy of a foreigner, an Elamite, upon whose shoulders the mantle of the great Sumerians, of Dungi, Eannatum and Gilgamesh, had fallen.

When Rim-Sin succeeded his brother on the throne of Larsam, Awil-Sin of Babylon had still ten years to rule. They were entirely uneventful years, judged by their date-formulæ; nor did Rim-Sin make any effort to hasten the conflict which he must have known to be inevitable. His early year-dates record the dedication of statues of his brother and father to various gods and the building of temples. In his ninth year he built a small temple to Enki at Ur, against the southern wall of the city, on the site of an older shrine erected during the III Dyn. The scanty ruins of this building have been excavated, and



CAVE OF THE FORTRESS BUILT AT U' BY WARU-NIN



PORTAL-STELA OF HAMMURABI.

among them, in a hollow chamber in one of the walls, was found a typical 'foundation-deposit', consisting of a well-preserved copper statuette of the king (represented as a shaven and tonsured priest) supporting on its head a steatite tablet inscribed with a dedication to *Enki, the lord who decides destinies*, the whole appearing just as it had been left when bricked in by the masons more than thirty-eight centuries before.

Next year, Awîl-Sin of Babylon died and his son Sin-Muballit reigned in his stead. This king appears to have noticed with misgiving the returning power and prosperity of Larsam under the Elamite dynasty. At any rate, he divided the first thirteen years of his reign pretty equally between the digging of canals and the fortification of cities. Only once in this period—in 1971 B.C. by the reckoning used here—did he attempt to try conclusions with his neighbour. Rim-Sin's date-formula for that year leaves us in no doubt as to the result of the tussle, for this was the *year when he smote the armies of Uruk, Isin, Babylon, Rapîqum and Sutium, and Waradnene king of Uruk, with the sword*. Sutium is a generic name for the wandering tribes of Semitic-speaking Badûw who hung about the western border of el-'Irâq and were probably as big a political nuisance in the XX cent. B.C., as they were in the beginning of the XX A.D. Their sympathies and self-interest alike would be with Amorite Babylon, but the desert tribesman has never been a trustworthy ally, and we may doubt whether their adherence was a real source of strength to the Babylonian cause. Rapîqum lay far up the Euphrates, near Ramâdi where the modern motor-route from Baghdâd to Damascus enters the Syrian desert. At this time it probably owed direct allegiance to Babylon. Isin, under its king Sin-Mâgir, was also by now a mere appanage of the northern capital. The German excavators at Babylon discovered a broken clay cone on which was the Sumerian record of his having built a temple to the sungod there.

The most surprising entry in the list of allies is Uruk. When and how that city had broken away from the control of Larsam, we cannot say. It seems likely that Rim-Sin had attempted to rejoin it to his kingdom, of which it formed geographically a natural part, and that Waradnene (if that be the correct

reading of his rather peculiar name) had appealed for help to the Babylonian coalition. In any event, Rim-Sin's was a decisive victory. On a clay cone now in the British Museum, he records how he built the temple of the god Ninsubur at Ur, *when he had smitten the armies of Uruk, Isin, Babylon, Rapiqum and Sutium with the sword and, in doing this, had captured Waradnene king of Uruk and, like a snake, had brought his head close to his feet.* This strange phrase is usually interpreted as meaning that the miserable Waradnene was tortured by being tied neck-and-heels. If so, it is the only known Sumerian record of the torturing of a prisoner. In later times, the Assyrians habitually perpetrated the most ghastly atrocities on their captives, and even the gentler Egyptians were not wholly innocent in this respect ; but the Sumerians, as previously emphasized, were the most humane of all early peoples. Evidently, though on other occasions he showed himself a magnanimous conqueror, Rim-Sin had a streak of Elamite ferocity in his nature. He may have borne a particular grudge against Waradnene for having involved him with the Babylonian coalition. It is certain that he attached great importance to the capture of Uruk, for he mentions it in other inscriptions. Indeed, by mastering this key-city of the South he had brought Babylonian politics into precisely the state in which they had been some six hundred years before, on the capture of that same city by Lugalzaggisi. Again the older population of the South, united under one leader (though this time a foreigner) stood face to face with the Semitic-speaking invaders who had occupied the North ; and though Sinmuballit of Babylon was no Sargon, a greater than Sargon was to succeed him and carry the crown of final victory to the North.

After his defeat at Uruk, Sin-muballit returned with renewed enthusiasm to his building of fortifications. Stout walls of brick evidently commended themselves to him as a most desirable barrier to place between himself and the ferocious overlord of the South. Rim-Sin, in the meanwhile, followed up his success by finally establishing the supremacy of Larsam in Sumer proper. In the year after the defeat of the allies he restored the sea-coast towns of Kaidda and Nagarum to his kingdom. Next year he paused from war and *dug the canal of the*

THE TRIUMPH OF BABYLON

plain, the canal of abundance, as far as the sea. In the four following years, the unidentified towns of Imgur-Gibil, Zibnatum, Bit-Gimil-Sin, Ugarpara and Sûrum and the city of *Kisurra* (mod. Abu-Hatab), only about 12 miles south-east of Isin, fell into his hands. Then, probably in 1964 B.C., *with the stout sword that Enlil had given him, he devastated Uruk : his hand seized upon its allied soldiers : over the people of the city he established mercy.* Evidently the conquest of 1971 had been incomplete and Uruk, probably aided by the tribesmen of Sutium, had struggled back to a brief independence. Its immediate and final reduction came as an unpleasant shock to Sin-muballit of Babylon, who hastily fortified the town of Maradda on his southern frontier, about 15 miles west of Nippur and 25 north-west of Isin.

Since Nippur was already in the hands of Rim-Sin, the 'kingdom' of Isin was this time reduced to an area smaller than that of Greater London. To obtain control of this feeble yet strategically important buffer-state and so join issues directly with Babylon was now the ambition of Rim-Sin. In 1962 B.C., however, his plans suffered a temporary reverse, for in this year, according to the reckoning employed here, Sin-muballit was able to record a defeat of 'the army of Ur', which, since Ur was Rim-Sin's second capital, can only have been an army of Larsam using Ur as its base and, presumably, operating from thence up the Euphrates. The success was ephemeral. Two years later, Rim-Sin invaded the territory of Isin and took 'the city of Dâmiq-Ilishu' its king. That he actually mastered the capital itself does not appear ; but this seems to have been the end of Dâmiq-Ilishu, last king of Isin, the servile ally of Babylon and heir of a long line of unfortunate and inglorious rulers. The splendours of Ishmé-Dagan and Libit-Ishtar, those just kings, had long been but a shadowy memory ; and now the very feeble substance upon which that shadow fell was taken away. The next year was called by Sin-Muballit of Babylon, *year when he took Isin.* It had been simply a race between Larsam and Babylon as to which of them should snatch the kingless city and Rim-Sin, despite his victory of the previous year, seems to have been caught napping. His next four years represent a period of retrenchment during which he dug two

canals and fortified the town of Zarbillum. Then, however, in his thirtieth year, *the true shepherd, Rim-Sin, took Dunnum the premier city of Isin in a single day ; his hand seized upon its garrison-troops : but he did not remove the people of the city from their dwelling-place.* This humane treatment of the vanquished (who, by the ordinary Oriental rules of war, might fairly have been plundered and transported to a strange land) is something of which Rim-Sin frequently boasts, and it shows him to have inherited the lofty and generous temper of his father, the good Kudur-Mabug.

The victory was a considerable one, but it is wholly eclipsed by that which earned for the following year the wordy and triumphant title :—

Year when, with the noble sword of An, Enlil and Enki, the true shepherd Rim-Sin took Isin, the royal city, and every one of its people, as many as there were. Upon its far-spread people he laid the hand of life ; but its title of kingship he removed for ever.

The first phase of this, the decisive struggle between North and South, was over. Rim-Sin's slowly but steadily aggressive policy had achieved the end proposed it—the final elimination of the buffer-state of Isin and the establishment of the garrisons of Larsam directly upon the frontiers of Babylon. So delighted was the victor at his success that (to the great privation of the modern historian) he gave up the custom of dating by events and inaugurated a fixed era, reckoning his succeeding thirty years of rule simply from the taking of Isin. It must have seemed to him that only patience and the flowering of time were needed to make him sole overlord of el-'Irâq. Yet, by an irony seldom paralleled in history, the very year of his triumph saw the accession to the throne of Babylon of one who was destined to smash his widening empire like a pot and eclipse his fame for ever by his own.

Sin-Muballit died—perhaps with ' Isin ' graven on his heart as ' Calais ' on Queen Mary's—in 1955 B.C. by the present scheme of dating. He was succeeded by the greatest of all the rulers of el-'Irâq from Sumerian times until to-day—his son *Hammurabi*. The character of this astonishing genius—statesman, soldier, administrator, lawgiver and reformer—will be discussed hereafter. His figure belongs not simply to Babylonian

THE TRIUMPH OF BABYLON

but to world history. He stands beside Cyrus and Kublai Khan and Akbar as one of the great monarchs of Asia. The date-formula chosen for his second year of kingship was prophetic of his whole work and days. He called it *year when he established justice*.

It is amazing that Rim-Sin neglected the opportunity of Sin-Muballit's death to strike a crippling blow at Babylon. Had he done so, he might have changed the course of human history. But for all his warlike achievements, one suspects a streak of indolence in the man. Four years earlier he had allowed Isin to slip temporarily between his fingers. The date-formulæ for his remaining years give us no information. The fourth year of Hammurabi, though, was the *year when the wall of Malgi was destroyed*. Malgi or Malgum was a district east of the Tigris and south of Kazallu, in the very heart of Rim-Sin's territory, so we have evidence here of a daring and successful raid on the part of Babylon. Three years later—presumably in 1949 B.C.—Hammurabi scored a more decisive triumph, for—perhaps taking advantage of Rim-Sin's preoccupation elsewhere—he captured that very city of Isin whose annexation by Larsam only seven years before had marked such an epoch in the struggle between North and South. Rim-Sin continued to date his years from his original occupation of the city, but it does not appear that he ever established control over it again.

Instead, he now attacked the Babylonian danger from a new and unexpected angle. In a previous section we traced the history of the now independent kingdom of Assyria down to the reign of Ahi-Ashir, whose date is probably 1962–1943 B.C. His successor, according to the chronicles, was named Rim-Sin. and most scholars are agreed that this is none other than our familiar Rim-Sin of Larsam, who—by what methods we may never know—had compensated himself for the loss of Isin by getting himself recognized as king of Assyria and so extending his authority clean up the Tigris as far as the Upper Zab river or thereabouts. So placed, he would be able to exercise a stranglehold on the grand stream of commerce which flowed from northern Syria and Asia Minor through Ashur to Babylon;—would be able to impose 'sanctions' in fact. That he really

FROM THE FALL OF UR TO THE RISE OF BABYLON

intended to make Hammurabi's position economically impossible is shown by his activities in another quarter, which we must consider now.

We last heard of the state of Eshnunna or Warum, in north-eastern Akkad, when it was ruled by the Sumerian Ur-Ninmar, perhaps in about 2100 B.C. This prince was succeeded (after the Elamite custom in vogue at Eshnunna) first by his brother, Ur-Ningishzida, and then by his son who bore the Semitic name of Ibiq-Adad I. The latter's imagination was evidently stirred by the traditions of the great Dyn. of Agade, for he assumed the title of 'god' and called his son Narâm-Sin. It seems that he ruled over Sippar for a time, before its annexation by Babylon round about 2050 B.C. He was followed by his brother Dadusha of whom the German excavators at Ashur found an interesting relic—a broken stone weight carved in the form of a duck and bearing the words: *The divine Dadusha, son of Ibiq-Adad, king of Eshnunna, gave this to his daughter Inibshina.* Apparently princess Inibshina had married a king of Ashur—possibly Irishum I—and this prettily-carved weight formed part of her dowry. Eshnunna, lying as it does in the extreme north-eastern corner of Akkad, would naturally have close relations with Assyria.

Dadusha was succeeded by his son Ibalwel (who rebuilt the great palace of Eshnunna) and his grandson Ibiq-Adad II, with whom, as Dr. Frankfort in his account of the excavations at Tell Asmar says, 'the history of Eshnunna becomes clearly an essential part of the history of Babylonia'. His predecessors had remained neutral in the long brawl between Babylon and Larsam, but he—doubtless from jealousy of his near neighbour, Babylon, and from the sympathy of his half-Elamite subjects for the Elamite Rim-Sin—became an active ally of Larsam. It will be remembered (page 235) that Rim-Sin defeated a Babylonian coalition of which Rapîqum on the middle Euphrates was a member. At some time after this, it seems, Ibiq-Adad II attacked and conquered this city, to reach which he must actually have marched his troops along the northern frontier of Babylon. On the bricks he used in enlarging his father's palace he calls himself *mighty king, king who enlarges Eshnunna, shepherd of mankind.*

THE TRIUMPH OF BABYLON

The loss of Rapîqum, which commanded the desert-route to Syria, must have been a severe blow to Babylonian commerce. The exact date of the event cannot be ascertained, but probably it happened before Hammurabi's accession. He at first seems to have resigned himself to it ; but when he realized that Rim-Sin (doubtless with the help of Eshnunna) was seeking to absorb Assyria and so cut him off on the east also, he was forced to act. Had he not done so, his position—with the enemy holding both routes to Syria and also, in Sumer, barring his way to Persia and the sea—would have been economically impossible. Accordingly, in his eleventh year—probably 1945 B.C.—he attacked Rapîqum and captured it. If the system of dating used in this book be correct, this happened only two years before Rim-Sin snatched the crown of Assyria. Ibiq-Adad II of Eshnunna may have died and been succeeded by his son Abdi-Arah before this.

Content with having secured this one gateway of trade, Hammurabi attempted no further military exploits of any kind for the astonishing period of seventeen years, employing himself in the building of forts, the dedication of thrones and statues to the gods and the digging of canals. He held all Akkad, save Eshnunna, and had a footing on the Euphrates. His enemy controlled Sumer and the Tigris. He would attempt no further war that was not forced on him.

The inability of Rim-Sin to grasp his opportunities has been commented on. It was never more apparent or more fatal than at the present juncture. His empire was larger than that of Ur-Nammu and not much smaller than that of Dungi. He had the armies of Elam to support him and he was, as we shall see, allying himself with the fierce tribes of Shubartu and the Kurdish mountains. Had he now marched the full strength of his Sumerian troops northward from Larsam and Ur against Hammurabi whilst his eastern and northern vassals and allies struck in from the flank, Babylon to-day might be a name of as little meaning to us as Isin or Akshak. But he did nothing. He was an old man now ; had ruled for more than forty years ; and his enemy was a man of inexhaustible patience and incomparable sagacity, one who could watch and watch and never stir till the day came for stirring.

FROM THE FALL OF UR TO THE RISE OF BABYLON

It was in the thirtieth year of Hammurabi and the sixtieth of Rim-Sin (1926 B.C. by the reckoning used here) that the storm broke. Incalculably too late—after he had allowed his enemy seventeen good years in which to strengthen his position—Rim-Sin loosed his motley crew of allies against Babylon. By a blunder which too plainly betrays the weakening of old age, only the eastern and northern contingents were employed. Let Hammurabi himself, in the magniloquent language of his year-date, report the upshot :

Hammurabi the king, the wise, the darling of Marduk, the mighty and glorious champion of the great gods, victoriously opposed the host of Elam, the border of Marhashi, Shubartu, Gutium, Eshnunna and Malgi which had come up in strength. He stablished the foundation of Sumer and Akkad.

The army, even though it wanted the Sumerian contingents, must have been the most formidable that ever invaded Babylonia. It speaks volumes for the generalship and the preparedness of Hammurabi that he should have defeated it. One is tempted most strongly to believe that it was to celebrate this victory and to urge the victor to undertake the offensive which followed it that an unknown Babylonian composed the extraordinary *Pæan to Hammurabi*, preserved on a tablet in the British Museum, a work whose vigorous and economical phraseology is in welcome contrast to the weary prolixity of the old Sumerian hymns to deified kings.

*Bel¹ has given thee supremacy :—
Whom then dost thou await ?
Sin has given thee pre-eminence :—
Whom then dost thou await ?
Ninurta has given thee a lordly weapon :—
Whom then dost thou await ?*

*Ishtar has given thee the battle and the foray :—
Whom then dost thou await ?
Shamash and Adad are thine allies :—
Whom then dost thou await ?*

¹ i.e. Baal, Enlil was commonly so called by the Babylonians.

THE TRIUMPH OF BABYLON

*Establish thy might in the Four Quarters !
Loud let thy name be cried !
Let far-flung folk adore thee :
To thee let them bow their heads !*

*Hammurabi the king, the great hero,
The destroyer of foes, the stormwind of war,
Smashing the hostile land, voiding rebellion,
Overwhelming revolt, breaking him that gives battle
Like a figure of clay, rending open the bars
Of impregnable hills !*

Wild indeed must have been the joy in Babylon at the removal of so terrible a menace. We can imagine how the drums which, since the beginning of time, have provided the accompaniment of all Eastern rejoicings, thudded down the narrow streets and how the revellers, singing and stamping round the bonfires, called the words to one another : ‘ *Whom then dost thou await ?* ’ Hammurabi heard them. He awaited nothing now. The time was ripe. Rim-Sin appears to have retired, after the defeat of his allies, to his father’s old patrimony of Emutbal (Yamutbal, as the Babylonians called it) east of the Tigris. Hither, in 1925 B.C., came Hammurabi in pursuit of him, to end their debate and to establish Babylon for good as the sole capital of el-‘Irâq. We have no details of the battle ; but we know that Rim-Sin himself, the hoary warrior who must now have been drawing to his eightieth year, was captured. We cannot doubt that he was put to death, for, even as a prisoner, he was too dangerous to keep alive. The empire of the Elamite house of Larsam was destroyed. It remained only for Hammurabi to collect its fragments and incorporate them in his own domain. Accordingly, in the following year *he cast down the host of Eshnunna, Shubartu and Gutium in battle. His hand subdued Malgum and the bank of the Tigris as far as the land of Shubartu.*

It seems likely that his conquest of Eshnunna was facilitated by an internal quarrel in that state. Abdi-Arah, it appears, had tried to exclude his brother Shiqianum from the succession in favour of a certain Amurru-Ili, possibly his son. A fragment of a military despatch found at Eshnunna apparently refers to a civil war in the time of Shiqianum. The latter obtained the

throne but was overthrown by Hammurabi. So ended the independent existence of a district which had kept sovereign status ever since the death of Ibi-Sin. Hammurabi's claim to have conquered the Tigris valley as far as Shubartu indicates that Assyria also lost her independence and fell to him after the elimination of Rim-Sin. The successor of Rim-Sin in the Assyrian chronicles is Irishum II, evidently a native of the country, of whom no monuments have been preserved. He was certainly a vassal of Hammurabi who, we know from another source, actually garrisoned Ashur with his own troops. Indeed, he pushed his authority still farther northward by occupying the ancient city of Nineveh (which now makes its first appearance in written history) and rebuilding the temple of the mother-goddess there.

Sumer proper passed automatically into his hands on the overthrow of Rim-Sin. It is not known that the Elamite prince left any heir. The names of his daughter, Lirish-gamlum, and of two of his wives, Rim-Sin-shala-bashtashu and Simat-Inanna, are known. In any event, unless they escaped to Elam the veteran's family must now have come into the power of Hammurabi. The king's method of signalizing his lordship over the South was typical of him. In his thirty-third year he dug a superb canal with the Semitic name *Hammurabi-nuhush-nîshi*, 'Hammurabi-is-the-prosperity-of-the-folk', which ran from Eridu to Nippur, providing 'permanent water of plenty' for Larsam, his old enemy's capital, Ur, Uruk and Isin. This fine achievement is celebrated in an inscription now in the Louvre. *Verily I have gathered Sumer and Akkad's scattered folk ; have provided pasture and irrigation for them ; have shepherded them in prosperity and abundance ; have caused them to inhabit habitations of peace.*

The boast which he was later to make—that he had brought wars to an end—could not yet be his. Rim-Sin's sympathizers east of Tigris were still in arms. In this same year he had to pacify the Shubarrians and fight against Malgum and Mari (presumably the eastern city of that name). Two years later he dismantled the walls of these cities and so finally subdued them. Meanwhile, he continued his great work of reconstruction. Babylon was to be the mistress of el-'Irâq not merely in

THE TRIUMPH OF BABYLON

his own day but for all time. With his usual politic sense, he retained Larsam as the administrative capital of the South, installing a trusted servant of his own, one Sin-idinnam, as governor there. Among the most fascinating treasures of the British Museum are a number of actual letters written by him to this man. Their terse and frigid style, the unambiguous clarity of their orders, give us an astonishing glimpse of the great king's mind—a mind as direct and keen as a drawn sword. One, evidently written soon after the conquest of Eshnunna, concerns the re-settlement of that district and the return to it of certain idols that had been seized by the Babylonians.

Say to Sin-idinnam, thus Hammurabi : ¹

The goddesses of Eshnunna in thy possession : I am sending thee a regiment belonging to Inuhsamar. When they reach thee, make up the regiment with the regiment in thy command, so that they can return the goddesses to their shrines.

The policy of Hammurabi was wherever possible a conciliatory one. He heaped favours on Larsam itself. In an inscription now in the British Museum he claims to have rebuilt for the sungod *his beloved house in Larsam, his city of lordship*. In the principal courtyard of the E-gepar-ku at Ur, that elaborate temple, he erected a great memorial-stela of diorite on which was carved his boast that he had fought seven victorious campaigns against the men of *Elam, Gutium, Shubartu and Tukrish, whose mountains are afar and whose tongues are difficult*. At Uruk, he rebuilt the mighty ziggurat, E-anna. Nor, among these kindnesses to Sumer, did he neglect his native Akkad. He set about rebuilding and improving the fortifications of Sippar and continued in that task until the day of his death. In his thirty-sixth year he began to restore E-meteursag, the grand temple of the wargod Ilbaba at Kish, and numerous bricks stamped with his inscription, as well as fragments of a great stela similar to that at Ur, have been dug up there. He also undertook building work at Kutha. His buildings at Babylon itself will be discussed later.

¹ *Say to A., thus B.* is the invariable opening of a Babylonian letter, an instruction to the secretary who was to read it aloud to the addressee.

FROM THE FALL OF UR TO THE RISE OF BABYLON

Far more noteworthy, far more enduring, however, than any work of bricks and mortar was the brilliantly efficient centralized system of administration which his genius created and his energy maintained. This system was more closely co-ordinated, less elastic, in a word less oriental, than that of the Sumerian empire of Ur. The old feudal tenure of land which had been such a feature of the administration of the Dyn. of Agade provided part of the basis for it. Landowners were responsible, through the local prefecture, to the crown for public services in connection with the land they held, as the following typically laconic royal letter illustrates.

Say to Sin-idinmam, thus Hammurabi :

Collect the men who are seized of estates on the bank of the Damnanum canal, so that they may dig out the Damnanum. Within this month let them have finished digging out the Damnanum.

It is the letter of a man unaccustomed to waste time or words. Hammurabi's day must have been as full as Napoleon's, for every minute detail, from the shearing of sheep to the debts incurred by the doorkeepers at the palace gate, received the royal attention. Like Browning's poet,

He took such cognizance of men and things,
If any beat a horse, you felt he saw ;
If any cursed a woman, he took note . . .

Only by such unsparing vigilance can the twin perennial evils of Eastern government—corruption and indolence—be combated. The king's eyes and ears were everywhere, and where the sight or sound of transgression offended them, his hand followed. 'The judge is a great man,' says a cynical Arab proverb, 'but make thy present to the clerk.' It is the understrapper, the intermediary, who is responsible for most of the corruption of justice in the East : but venality in his underlings was something that Hammurabi would not tolerate. One of the very few of his letters which is longer than a mere *chit* runs :

Say to Sin-idinmam, thus Hammurabi :

Shumman-la-Ilum has deposed as follows. Thus he : 'Bribery has taken place in Durgurgurri. The men who took the bribe and wit-

THE TRIUMPH OF BABYLON

nesses who know these facts are to hand.' Thus he has deposed. Now then ! I am sending this Shumman-la-Ilum and two officers to thee. On reading this letter, inquire into the case, and if bribery has taken place, set the silver and whatever was in the bribe under seal and have it brought to me. Send me the men who took the bribes and the witnesses who know these facts, whom Shumman-la-Ilum will point out.

One would like to know what happened to the corrupt officials when they came into the presence of their king. It is improbable that they died of old age.

Fascinating as are the letters of Hammurabi in the glimpses they give of a phenomenally active, balanced, broad intelligence at grips with problems that (to one at all familiar with the middle East) have an astonishingly modern quality, space forbids that we should spend more time on them. A more impressive monument exists to the genius of Hammurabi, in the shape of the famous *Code of Laws* which he promulgated and which, preserved by a supreme stroke of archæological good-fortune, remains to this day 'one of the most important documents in the history of the human race'.¹

Law-codes, as we have seen, had been promulgated in Babylonia before that day : nor is there any doubt that Hammurabi's great code was largely—but not *entirely*—based on old Sumerian originals. What distinguishes it—as it also distinguishes his other great achievement, the creation of the Babylonian Empire—from the work of his predecessors is its character of permanence. The laws of Dungi and Libit-Ishtar lapsed and were forgotten. The Code of Hammurabi continued—though doubtless modified in practice by later usage—in force in Babylonia for about 1,200 years. No amount of garrisoning and dragooning, no propaganda of emperor-worship, however extreme, could have worked so powerfully toward the final unification of the peoples of Sumer and Akkad, the forging of the scrap-iron of old city-states into a nation, as did this imposition upon them of a common law. The Code is wonderful to us to-day, not simply because it is the most ancient collection of laws which has survived the tooth of time, but because it does really represent a milestone in human pro-

¹ R. Campbell Thompson in *Cambridge Ancient Hist.*, Vol. I. Ch. XIII.

FROM THE FALL OF UR TO THE RISE OF BABYLON

gress—the crystallization of a fluid and changing into a static and permanent civilization. We may say that with its promulgation the Primitive Age of Babylonian history comes instantly to an end and the Age of Consolidation has begun.

The actual laws of the Code will be analysed in the next section ; but a few facts about it may be recorded here. The text as we possess it is written not in Sumerian—as every previous important public document in Babylonian history, save for the monuments of Sargon and Narâm-Sin, had been—but in a pure and classical style of the Semitic language which, for the future, we shall call *Babylonian*. This language is the direct descendant of old Akkadian, from which it differs less than the English of Shakespeare does from that of Chaucer. At this time, and for about fifteen centuries to come, it was the principal speech of el-'Irâq. Sumerian was lapsing from the tongues of men—the dying language of a dying race. Hammurabi and his successors wrote most of their inscriptions in parallel columns of both tongues, but in the centuries to follow them, Sumerian became a fossilized language for the use of priests, written (and very incorrectly written) but not spoken ; suffered in fact the fate of Latin in the Middle Ages. As late as the VII cent. B.C., Ashurbânipal, the scholarly and blood-thirsty tyrant of Assyria, was able to stamp a reasonably grammatical Sumerian inscription on the bricks with which he repaired the age-old *ziggurat* at Nippur : but the pilgrims to that shrine could no more read it than the average churchgoer can read the Hebrew name of God which one sees on the reredos in some English churches.

The copy of the Hammurabi Code which is now the most precious treasure of the Oriental Department of the Louvre is carved on a massive stela or round-topped column of coal-black diorite, some six feet high, which was found by the ever-fortunate de Morgan at Susa in 1901, along with the stela of Narâm-Sin and many other supreme monuments of Babylonian culture which had been carried off by Elamite robbers. Originally, the text consisted of 51 columns of very beautiful and clear cuneiform writing, surmounted by a bas-relief showing Hammurabi revering the enthroned figure of Shamash, the sungod, patron of law and justice. Five columns, however,

THE TRIUMPH OF BABYLON

have been deliberately erased by the miserable brigand who stole it, probably with the intention of perpetuating his own unworthy name—an intention in which he was forestalled, one hopes by some disastrous fate. In addition to the actual laws, whose phraseology is at once so lucid and so curt that one is tempted to attribute it to the king himself, the text contains a long prologue and epilogue setting forth the virtues of Hammurabi and the purpose for which, he claims, the gods of Babylon had elevated him to the supreme rulership of the land.

Me, Hammurabi, the noble prince who reveres the gods, have they called by name, to make righteousness to shine forth in the land, to destroy the wrongdoer and the wicked man, that the strong should not oppress the weak, to come forth like the sun upon mankind and to illumine the land.

In the epilogue he adds :

Let the oppressed man who has cause come before my image, ' THE KING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS '. Let him read my written monument, hear my precious words, and my monument shall make clear his case to him. Let him behold his justice and let his heart be glad !

The precise date in the reign at which the great Code was promulgated is not known. It was obviously after the defeat of Rim-Sin and the digging of the *Hammurabi-nuhush-nîshi* canal. The great king had twice again to fight against Shubartu, once in the thirty-seventh and again in the thirty-ninth year. On the former occasion, he conquered Turuqqum and Kaqqum, two hill-districts lying somewhere east of Assyria. The malign activity of the mountaineers in Kurdistan, the agelong Achilles' heel of el-'Irâq, was—could he but have foreseen it—the presage of an invasion which was finally to subvert his dynasty. Once again, as at the close of the III Dyn. of Ur, a vast racial movement was sweeping through the middle East, threatening a day of clouds and of great wrath. With its effects on Babylonia we shall deal in the last chapter. What we have now to consider further is the organization of that country under Hammurabi and his successors which enabled the Babylonian culture of the Age of Consolidation to meet and to survive its impact.

Babylon, the new and permanent capital of el-'Irâq, lies

FROM THE FALL OF UR TO THE RISE OF BABYLON

on the Euphrates some 50 miles due south of Baghdâd, on the railway-line to Basrah, and close to the picturesque modern town of Hillah. So placed, it was excellently able to dominate the great trade-routes from the north and west toward the south. Its site to-day is covered by the six great mounds of Bâbil, el-Qasr, 'Omran-ibn-'Âli, Merkes, Ishin-Aswad and Hamra, among which two Arab villages now lie. Classical authors assert that the city was divided into two equal parts by the Euphrates and that the circumference of its outer wall was over 50 miles. This is undoubtedly nonsense. By far the greater part of the city—all that covered by the six *tells* named—lay on the east bank of the river. It is roughly in the form of a triangle having the Euphrates for its base. The total length of the two walls forming its north-eastern and south-eastern sides is about 4 miles. The tireless industry of the German expedition under Koldewey which dug the ruins, winter and summer alike, from 1899 to 1914 has revealed enormous buildings, forts, palaces, temples and private houses. But unfortunately almost all of these date from no earlier than the VI cent. B.C., from the days of Nebuchadnezzar the Great and his father Nabopolassar, by whom the city was entirely reconstructed; the works of Hammurabi and his successors of the II millennium B.C. are still hidden under their foundations.

Since, however, excavation has taught us that a particular site once consecrated to a particular purpose usually retains that purpose throughout history, we can make some guess at the topography of the city in Hammurabi's time simply from the character of the buildings put up by Nebuchadnezzar. The great municipal centre lay by the river, roughly opposite the angle made by the walls, and is marked by the two mounds of el-Qasr and 'Omran-ibn-'Âli and the small plain between them which is called by the Arabs es-Sakhn, 'the Dish', and by the Babylonians *Irsit Bâbili*, 'the Ground of Babylon'. This was evidently the site of the first settlement, as old, at any rate, as the Dyn. of Agade. At the southern end of this, the Qasr mound marks the site of a vast fortified palace built by Nabopolassar and rebuilt by Nebuchadnezzar. Doubtless Hammurabi's royal residence stood likewise on this spot. Past its eastern end ran the main street called *Aibur-shabû*

THE TRIUMPH OF BABYLON

which, in Nebuchadnezzar's time at any rate, was spanned by the superb ornamental gateway, with its wonderful friezes of moulded and enamelled brickwork, known as the Ishtar-Gate. West of this, the sacred street led up to the famous temple of the city-god, Marduk, henceforth to be the supreme deity of Sumer and Akkad. The temple and its seven-staged *ziggurat*, which was some 320 ft. square and probably over 100 ft. high, bore rolling Sumerian names, E-sagila, 'High-headed House', and E-temenanki, 'House of the Foundation of Heaven and Earth'.

Here were performed the mimes and ceremonies connected with the great New Year Festival which was the very pulse of Babylonian civic and religious life. These included a public reading of the Epic called *Ēnuma Ēlish* which told how Marduk slew the dragon of chaos, Tîamat, and formed heaven and earth out of her monstrous carcase, splitting it in two 'like an oyster'; a strange mystery-play presenting the death and resurrection of Marduk; a Council of the Gods in which the destinies of the coming year were decided; and the symbolic deposition and reinstatement of the reigning king. The high-priest stripped the king of his regalia, slapped him in the face, pulled him by the ears into the inner sanctuary of Marduk and made him kneel before the god. He then reindued him with his robes and slapped him again, it being a lucky omen if the blow were hard enough to bring tears. This ceremony, childish as it seems to us, is undoubtedly a fossilized relic of the very early days when the king or tribal chief was actually put to death, after reigning for a specific period, as a sacrifice to the god whose earthly representative he had been.

To the east of the sacred street already mentioned, a residential quarter actually dating from the time of Hammurabi has been unearthed. The houses were of crude *libn* and can hardly have belonged to well-to-do persons, as those discovered at Ur seem to have done. But they show one vast improvement on the latter, an improvement typical of the new order and good sense which Hammurabi and his dynasty were introducing into every department of human life. The streets, instead of sprawling and meandering vaguely as before, are laid out in regular straight lines intersecting more or less at

FROM THE FALL OF UR TO THE RISE OF BABYLON

right-angles. This is the first example of organized town-planning in el-'Irâq, some six centuries later than the period of its highest development in India.

The above is all that we know, for the age under discussion, of Hammurabi's capital, which had for all time overshadowed Kish and Uruk and which, despite savage raids and Assyrian conquests, was to retain the lordship of Sumer and Akkad while the Trojans broached their ramparts to bring in the Wooden Horse, while Isaiah saw his vision of the seraphim, while Rome was breaking the Etruscan power in Italy, until Alexander of Macedon came to die within its walls.

The last years of Hammurabi were uneventful. He had subdued his enemies at home and shattered them abroad. The splendid machine of government which he had created functioned without hitches. Thunder, it is true, was rumbling among the eastern mountain-peaks, but we may question if he heard it. He was old now, but his energy had not deserted him. In his forty-third year he was still at work on the great wall with which he was fortifying Sippar ; and in the year after (probably 1912 B.C.) the wisest and the mightiest of all the native kings of Babylonia was dead.

We possess two portraits, both in bas-relief, of this extraordinary man, one on the great stela of the Code of Laws and one on a broken slab in the British Museum. Neither is a work of outstanding merit—the great age of Babylonian sculpture was closed for good—but both are obvious likenesses. The thin aristocratic nose, high cheekbones, small mouth and the pointed chin which can be guessed under the heavy beard recall an 'Irâqi Arab gentleman of the best blood. The fact has often been commented on in connection with Hammurabi's Amorite ancestry. The man was of desert stock most obviously ; but of that stock which, once it is in contact with the civilization of settled folk, assimilates it with wonderful rapidity. Of the resultant product—of the great nobleman of sedentary life and nomad ancestry—Hammurabi is the best imaginable example, for in him all the virtues of the Oriental, the fiery mind and furious bravery of the desert, the learning and worldly shrewdness of the city, met and were reconciled.

6. *The Code of Hammurabi*

We are now to examine briefly the details of that great creation by which, more than by any of his military or political successes, the name of Hammurabi is remembered. The nature of the inscription which contains his great Legal Code has been touched upon already. The actual corpus of laws occupies 46 out of the 51 columns of the text and originally contained something over 280 distinct rulings, very curtly phrased, covering the whole field of civil and criminal law. A discussion of Babylonian technical terms would be out of place here, but we must notice the rigid division of society into three grades or classes, the *awilum* or gentleman, the *mushkēnum* or freeman, and the *wardum* or chattel-slave. The word *awilum* means primarily only 'man' and is used frequently in this general sense by Hammurabi: but in other places in the Code there is clearly a distinction between the *awilum* and the remaining classes of society. Injuries done to him are to be compensated, and wrongs committed by him expiated, at a higher rate than in the case of the *mushkēnum*. In such a context, *awilum* obviously means a person of high social rank with peculiar privileges and duties, and here 'gentleman' seems a fair translation. The *mushkēnum*, it is evident from the context, was definitely a freeman and no slave, but of lower standing than the *awilum*. From this ancient Babylonian term is derived the modern Arabic *masqīn*—'poor man', a word which the European in the East hears whined at his elbow a dozen times a day—and thence, by direct descent over four thousand years, the French adjective *mesquin*! In Hammurabi's day, however, the *mushkēnum* was not necessarily indigent, so that 'freeman' is perhaps the safest translation. The *wardum* was a slave pure and simple, though even he possessed certain rights at law.

Numerous classes of officials, both civil and ecclesiastical, are mentioned in the Code. We may cite first the judge, *dayānum*, of whom there was a bench of several in each city. The old administration by an *isag* had been given up, and we now find towns and districts administered by a prefect,

shakkanakkum, or by a mayor and council. Two classes of minor officials who are frequently spoken of in the Code are the *rêdum* and the *bâ'irum*. Both held land on feudal tenure from the king and were liable for military and perhaps other kinds of service. Their tenure and service were hereditary. Another official was the *nâgîrum*, whose duties seem to have been to hold inquiries about lost property and the like and whose title we might render as 'coroner'.

The penalties inflicted by the Code are terribly severe. More than thirty different offences are punishable by death, sometimes death by burning or impalation. More dreadful still was a survival of the barbaric *lex talionis*, whereby, if under certain circumstances a man accidentally brought about the death of a child, not he, but *his* child must be killed. We can hope that this cruel law was modified in practice by the child-slayer's compounding with the bereaved parents. As in the early Middle Ages, the ordeal by water was employed. An accused person must *go to the divine River* (i.e., the Tigris, or Euphrates) and jump in. If he sank, it was a proof of guilt, if he floated, of innocence. This, by the way, was the exact opposite of the mediæval notion. We may smile or shudder at such forms of trial and punishment ; but it should be realized that the Oriental has never prized human life too highly or learnt wholly to dissociate the ideas of justice and of bloodshed. It should be remembered, also, that it is not so very much more than a century since a nine-year-old boy was hanged by English law, and considerably less since an American slave-owner deliberately whipped one of his slaves to death and was acquitted by the courts without a stain on his character ; whilst at the very moment that these words are written, there are thousands of poor wretches in Europe who have been deprived of their liberty on political charges without the opportunity even of an ordeal by water to decide their guilt or innocence.

Following is a synopsis of the laws contained in the Code, in their original order.

Procedure and Evidence, Perjury.

A false accusation was punishable by death, the goods of the accuser being forfeit to the accused if the latter established his

THE CODE OF HAMMURABI

innocence by ordeal. Perjury on the part of a witness was punishable by death in a criminal case and by payment of a sum equal to the penalty involved in a civil action. A judge who, having given the award in a case, illegally annulled his own finding forfeited his office and paid twelve times the sum in dispute.

Private Property and Theft.

The theft of goods belonging to the king or a temple, and the receiving of such goods, was a capital offence. The theft of livestock or boats from the same source could be compounded by thirtyfold repayment, and by tenfold repayment in the case of theft from a freeman. *If the thief have not the wherewithal to pay, he shall be killed.* It was a capital offence to purchase or take as a pledge any property from a man's slave or his son (who might not really be authorized to part with it) except before witnesses and by means of a written conveyance. If stolen goods had been purchased in good faith, the seller was put to death, the purchaser recompensed out of his estate and the goods returned to their owner : had he died in the meanwhile, the purchaser might recover fivefold from his estate. In the event of either property being wrongfully claimed a stolen or stolen property being falsely represented as a *bona fide* purchase, the perjurer was put to death. A stay of six months was allowed for witnesses on both sides to be collected. Kidnapping and misappropriation of slaves were capital crimes, but the man who returned a runaway slave was entitled to a reward. The bandit and house-breaker were liable to the death-penalty, the latter being buried on the scene of his crime, whilst the man who stole from a burning house under pretence of helping to put it out was simply thrown into the flames. In a case of highway-robbery, if the thief was not caught the victim had a claim on the local authorities, and if there had been murder to boot, the latter had to pay blood-money.

Feudal Tenure.

Those who held land on conditions of service were forbidden to delegate their duties to a substitute on pain of death. If they were captured by the king's enemies they resumed their

FROM THE FALL OF UR TO THE RISE OF BABYLON

holdings and duties on their return. In the meanwhile, these devolved on their sons or, if the latter were under age, on substitutes who must support them during infancy. If they vacated their lands for any other cause, they might not reclaim them after 3 years. Land and cattle held on feudal tenure might not be alienated, whilst it was a capital crime for a higher official to replace a feudal tenant or to oppress or ill-use him.

Land Tenure and Agriculture.

A man who had rented arable land on condition of cultivating it was liable to a forfeit if he failed to carry out the bargain, and had further to bear any loss occasioned by flood. In the case of a mortgage, however, the mortgager could defer payment in the event of the year's crop being spoiled. In the event of a man handing over arable land for a period to another, against an advance of money, he could claim the yield of it after deduction of the loan, its interest and the cost of husbandry. Carelessness in the building or maintenance of the irrigation-dykes which are an essential feature of 'Irâqi agriculture rendered a man liable for damage done, as was the shepherd who let his flocks into the standing crop. To chop one's neighbour's timber rendered one—so precious was that commodity in Babylonia—liable to a penalty of half a *mina* of silver. In the event of a tenant who had rented land for an agreed period being ejected before its elapse, he might recover the appropriate portion of the rent.

Commercial Law.

The relations between the capitalist and the small retailer or agent were most carefully regulated. The latter would borrow money or receive goods on credit from the former, who naturally took the lion's share of the subsequent profit. If the agent failed to make any profit, he was still forced to repay double the sum borrowed. Even if he made a loss, he must repay the principal. If he were robbed of it, however, he cleared himself on oath and the loss was the capitalist's. Accounts had to be kept and receipts issued. If the agent sought to repudiate his liabilities he had to pay the capitalist

THE CODE OF HAMMURABI

three times the sum involved, but the capitalist guilty of the same trick must pay sixfold.

Licensed Victuallers.

The proper payment for strong drink was in grain, and the ale-wife who sold her wares for silver at a higher rate was to be drowned ! She might, however, sell drink on credit and be repaid with interest at harvest-time. If she allowed conspirators to assemble in her tavern and failed to notify the police, she died, whilst the priestess who defiled her office by even entering such a place was burnt alive.

Loans, Trusts and Debts.

The man who sought to misappropriate money or goods given him for transport had to repay them fivefold. In the event of goods being loaned, the creditor might not remove any part of them from the possession of the debtor without notifying the latter, on pain of forfeiting the whole. Wrongful arrest for debt entitled the victim to a third of a *mina* damages. The defaulting debtor might be sold into slavery along with his own slaves and his wife and children. The last-named were to be freed after three years, and the debtor had the legal right to repurchase a female slave who had borne him children. If any of these unfortunate hostages died of ill-usage, the creditor forfeited all claims and must pay a third of a *mina*. If it were the son of the debtor who died, his own son was put to death. Corn might be stored on another's premises at an annual charge of five *qa* per *gur*. If the owner of the premises lost or misappropriated it, he was to repay double. Other objects stored with a second party could only be reclaimed if the deposit was made before witnesses and a receipt issued. If these conditions were fulfilled an attempt to repudiate the receipt involved a double refund. The same penalty attached to a false claim. The person with whom goods were deposited was liable in case of theft.

Marriage.

False aspersion of the honour of a married woman or priestess was punished by cutting a brandmark on the forehead

of the slanderer. Marriage was only legal when recorded in writing. Adultery on the part of the wife was punished by the drowning of herself and her paramour, but *if the husband of the wife will spare his wife, then the king will spare his servant*. A woman accused of adultery without proof might clear herself on oath or, where the suspicion was grave, by ordeal. A woman whose husband was a prisoner of war might marry again, if her husband had left her unsupported. On his return he reclaimed her, her second husband retaining the children she had borne him. If she had means of support and yet married again, she was to be drowned. In the event of the husband being outlawed, the marriage was annulled. A divorced woman was entitled to the return of her dowry and of the heritage of her infant sons, whom she took with her. On her sons' coming of age she shared the heritage with them and might marry again. If she had no sons, she received her dowry and settlement or, where there had been no settlement, one *mina* from a gentleman or a third of a *mina* from a freeman. If she could be proved to have been wasteful and ill-behaved, she had no claim and might be reduced to the rank of a servant whilst the husband married again ; but care was to be taken that this charge was substantiated. If her behaviour had been grossly outrageous, she might be drowned.

If a childless wife presented her husband with a girl-slave who bore him children (after the fashion of Sara and Hagar) he might not take another wife from outside. Even where he might take a concubine, *that concubine shall not make herself equal to the wife*. A slave-girl, too, whom the wife had presented to her husband, might be reduced to her former rank if she gave herself airs, but not sold if she had borne children. A sick ¹ wife might not be divorced. Her husband might marry again, but must provide her with a special house and support her for life unless she preferred to take her dowry and go. A wife might inherit under her husband's will, but such an inheritance was entailed on her sons, to one of whom she must leave it. Neither party to a marriage might be enslaved for a debt contracted by the other before marriage. If a woman

¹ A special sickness called *la'bum* is here referred to. It was evidently infectious ; perhaps leprosy ?

THE CODE OF HAMMURABI

caused her husband's death on account of another man she was impaled on a sharpened stake. Incest was punished with death or banishment. Breach of promise involved forfeit of the bride-price, but where the betrothal was broken by the girl's father he had to repay the bride-price double, and where the father's action was due to reflections made on the groom's character by a neighbour it was expressly forbidden for that neighbour to take the bride to wife himself. On the wife's death, her dowry went to her children or, failing these, to her father who, for his part, must repay the bride-price to the husband or have it deducted from the dowry.

Inheritance.

A favourite son to whom the father had made over property during his lifetime was still entitled to his share in the estate. A son who had been too young to marry during his father's lifetime received the value of a bride-price over and above his share in the estate. Where there were sons by more than one wife, the dowry of each wife was divided among her own sons only, the estate of the father among all. A father might disinherit his son only by a legal action, and then only when he had twice been guilty of some grievous fault. Children borne by a slave-girl to her master and formally recognized by him as his sons might inherit equally with the sons of the lawful wife, but the eldest of the latter had first choice in dividing the estate. If the master had merely given the girl and her sons their freedom, they had no claim. The lawful wife possessed her husband's dwelling-house, along with her dowry and whatever her husband had left her, for life, with reversion to her sons. If no special provision had been made for her in the will, she received a share of the estate with her sons. If the latter tried to drive her out of the house, they were answerable at law and she might then, if she so pleased, take her dowry and marry again. If she had children by the second marriage, these would share her dowry with the earlier ones after her death. The children of a slave by a free woman were free. On the death of the slave, his estate (since slaves might own property) was divided between his master and his widow, who held her share in trust for the

FROM THE FALL OF UR TO THE RISE OF BABYLON

children. A widow whose children were under age might only marry again with the approval of a magistrate. She and her second husband would then hold her estate in trust for her children by the first husband.

Priestesses.

The inheritance of a priestess under her father's will might be of two kinds, according to whether her father had entailed it or not. If unentailed, her brothers administered it during her lifetime and had the reversion ; if entailed, it was administered by the person on whom it was entailed. All daughters not otherwise provided for by will were entitled to a share in the paternal estate for life, with reversion to the brothers, except in the case of a priestess of Marduk at Babylon who *may leave her bequest to whoever pleases her.*

Adoption.

An adopted child might not be reclaimed by its natural parents except in the case of an apprentice whose master failed to teach him his trade or where the adoptive father refused to allow his claim to be regarded as an heir. He might, however, be expelled for misbehaviour. If an adoptive father afterward married and had children of his own, he might not expel the adopted child who had a right to inherit one-third of his movable goods but had no claim on his real estate. The child of a loose woman, if adopted, could never be reclaimed. If he denied his adoptive parents his tongue was cut out. If he returned to his natural parents, his eye was put out. A foster-mother who substituted another child for one that had died in her care, intending to deceive, had her breasts cut off.

Assault.

The son who struck his father must lose both hands. To break the bone or blind the eye of a gentleman cost eye for eye ; of a freeman, one *mina* of silver ; of a slave, half his market-value. Tooth went for tooth in the case of gentlemen. A freeman's tooth was valued at a third of a *mina*. To strike one's social superior brought one sixty strokes of the lash

THE CODE OF HAMMURABI

in the assembly unless one was a slave, in which case one lost an ear. A blow from a social equal, however, was worth one *mina* among gentlemen and 10 *shekels* among freemen. In the case of injury done unintentionally during a general uproar, the offender might clear himself on oath and pay the doctor's bill. Even if the victim died under such circumstances, a payment of damages closed the matter. To ill-use a pregnant woman so that she miscarried was punishable in the same way, but if the woman was of gentle birth, and died, the daughter of the transgressor was to be killed.

Physicians.

The charges which a physician might make for *curing* (not simply treating) various major injuries were on a fixed scale according to the status of the patient. If by clumsiness he killed or blinded his patient he was liable for damages on a similar scale. If the patient was a gentleman, his hands were cut off. A veterinary surgeon received one-sixth of a *shekel* for curing a beast, but had to pay a quarter of its value if he only succeeded in killing it. A barber who, without the consent of the owner, expunged a slave's brandmark lost his hands. If he had acted in good faith, at the suggestion of someone falsely representing himself as the owner, he might clear himself on oath and the impostor was put to death.

Builders.

These worked at a fixed rate. If a master-builder was careless and his work collapsed and caused damage he was liable in full and must make the work good also. If the householder or his son were killed, the builder or his son suffered death.

River Navigation.

The payment of shipbuilders and sailors was fixed by law. Sailors who lost their boats or cargoes by negligence were liable for damages. In the event of a towed boat being sunk by one under sail, the owners of the latter were liable.

FROM THE FALL OF UR TO THE RISE OF BABYLON

Livestock.

The hire of livestock was likewise fixed. If a hired beast were killed by a lion or died of disease, the loss was the owner's ; but if it died or was injured through the hirer's negligence it must be replaced or compensation paid. If a bull went mad and gored a man to death, the owner was not liable ; but if it was known to be vicious and he had taken no precaution he had to pay half a *mina*.

Agricultural Labourers.

A hired labourer who had been put in charge of land and grain or cattle was liable to pay compensation for negligent work. If he embezzled the seed-corn his hands were cut off. The pay of herdsmen and sowers was at a fixed rate. The theft of irrigation-machines was punished by fine. A herdsman who had lost or alienated beasts in his charge must replace them, but he was not liable for loss by sickness or lions unless guilty of contributory negligence.

Hire of Necessaries and Workmen.

This section is rather damaged. It contained a tariff for the hire of various labourers, beasts for specific purposes, wagons and boats.

Slaves.

A slave who fell sick within a month of purchase could be returned to the seller and his price recovered. If a purchased slave proved to be the property of a third party, the purchaser must surrender him but could recover from the seller. If a Babylonian slave, purchased abroad, were brought back to Babylonia and there identified by his rightful owner, the purchaser must surrender him without compensation. A foreign slave, similarly identified, must be repurchased. A slave who denied his master had his ear cut off.

Such, in briefest outline, were the laws by which Hammurabi ruled his empire. What must chiefly have impressed the reader will not be their strangeness—their relics of barbarism—but their familiarity. Taken as a whole, the Code

THE CODE OF HAMMURABI

is an astonishingly modern document. Only in one major respect—the dreadful wickedness of punishing the father by the death of his children—does it offend our sense of equity to-day. The penalties it applies seem to us hideously severe, but it applies them after a trial that we can understand and for offences that we condemn. The position of the accused during the hearing of a case was a distinctly strong one. As in modern English law, the onus of proof lay on the prosecution, whilst the swinging penalties attached to perjury and false accusation must have ensured that malicious actions were very seldom brought. Judicial examination by torture seems to be unknown. The utmost pains are taken to protect private ownership and the rights of the individual. Indeed, the whole basis of the Code is individualistic and one searches it in vain for any trace of that modern Moloch, the theory of the Totalitarian State. Generally speaking, too, the balance is well held between the rich and the poor, though it must be admitted that in some cases the former get distinctly the best of the bargain. The status of women in society is, from the Oriental standpoint, definitely an emancipated one. The married woman of Babylonia could own property, which is more than our own great-grandmothers could. In the whole department of family life, the Code is markedly in advance, not only of the old Sumerian laws ¹ but also of much later laws in vogue in Assyria.³

¹ See Ch. V.

³ The reader is again reminded that discoveries made since the writing of this volume have brought the chronology used in the preceding chapter into doubt. The tentative dates B.C. should therefore be *ignored*. See Appendix.

CHAPTER VII

EPILOGUE : THE NEW WORLD

With the death of Hammurabi, the real theme of this text-book—the development of middle Eastern civilization during the Primitive Age—comes to an end. Hammurabi, by his own brilliant ability, brought to the culture of Babylonia the fixity which is characteristic of the Age of Consolidation. Yet one more great cultural revolution, one more mingling of races in the eternal melting-pot of the middle East, was to take place before that Age was finally established. We shall not, during the centuries which remain for our consideration, examine men or events in so much detail as heretofore. To do so would be to exceed our proposed limits, and to expand a text-book into a history. Nor is it needful that we should, since what we have still to consider is, in a sense, only the logical development—in fact, the *consolidation*—of what we have dealt with in the past.

Samsu-Iluna (prob. 1912–1875 B.C.), son of Hammurabi, was not, it must be admitted, in all respects a worthy successor to his father. His first eight years were devoted to canal-digging and pious works, but then, in the list of his date-formulæ, there comes a very significant entry to the effect that he defeated *the host of the Kashshû*. The Kashshû, Kassites or Cossæans (Greek Kissioi) were an obscure and savage people dwelling in the eastern mountains, immediately north of Elam. Judged by the little we know of their language, they most probably belonged to the same racial stock as the other peoples of that country : but at the time of which we are speaking, and later, we find them under the rule of a separate aristocracy or noble class whose names, and those of the gods they worshipped, are undoubtedly *Indogermanic* ¹

¹ See Ch. IV.

(that is, belonging to the same great linguistic group as English and Sanskrit). We saw, in dealing with the ancient civilization of India, how at some time round about 1500 B.C. the Indogermanic-speaking Âryans burst into that country and conquered and enslaved its older inhabitants. We noted then that this represented simply the easternmost phase of a vast racial movement which, starting probably from eastern Europe, spread all through Asia Minor and the middle East. Here, among the Kassites of the Mountain Barrier, we meet slightly earlier traces of the same great historical event. The overlords of the Kassites, with their un-Asiatic names and gods, were relatives of the conquerors of India. They may fairly be called Âryans. In their names for the sungod, *Shuriyash*, the war-goddess, *Shumaliya*, the storm-god, *Maruttash*, we recognize the Hindu *Surya*, *Himâlya*, *Marut*. How a band of these European wanderers, far from their ancestral home, came to be accepted as a ruling class by the fierce Kassites is a question to which we can give some answer. Partly, no doubt, it was due to that natural gift for leadership which the early Indogermanic peoples do really seem to have possessed ; but a more concrete advantage was their knowledge of the great art of horsemanship and of the care and breeding of horses. This, too, is typical of the first appearance of the Âryans everywhere in Asia. The Babylonians, as we have seen, were acquainted with the horse and yoked him sometimes to their chariots ; but he was a rare beast to them, and certainly they never ventured to sit astride his back. There is evidence that, at a slightly later date at least, the Âryans did so. The military advantage of cavalry was inestimable to them, and we can say that with their establishment as a ruling class in any part of the middle East, whether they actually rode or only drove in chariots, the social distinction between *caballero* and *peon*, between the man who rides and the man who walks, was introduced at once. The Âryan ruling class among the Kassites constituted, in the primitive original sense of the word, a *chivalry*.

The disciplined Babylonian levies repelled the Kassites with their mounted Âryan leaders at the first encounter. Hardly had they done so than Samsu-Iluna found himself

EPILOGUE

faced by another and more immediate danger—a revolt on the part of the chief cities of the Sumerian plain. It was the last flicker (if indeed it can even be considered as a national and not a political movement) of the national spirit of the Sumerians. Its centres were the two traditional Sumerian capitals, Uruk and Ur. At the latter place, the rebels smashed in pieces the great memorial-stela of Hammurabi, and the modern excavators found fragments of it still scattered about the courtyard of E-gepar-ku. Samsu-Iluna revenged himself savagely. His troops sacked and burned Ur, which from this point virtually disappears from history for about five centuries, and destroyed its walls and those of Uruk. Four years later, Isin had to be similarly punished. The work of the great Hammurabi seemed melting to chaos again. It was necessary to fortify the cities of Akkad against a possible attack from the rebellious South. A worse blow was soon to fall.¹ As in the bad old days after the Amorite conquest, an independent dynasty arose in the marshland round the Persian Gulf, called in Sumerian *Kur-Aabba* and in Babylonian *Mat-Tâmtim*, i.e. the Sealand. Its founder was a Semite, by name Iluma-Ilum, and he began to reign probably in 1884 B.C. Against him Samsu-Iluna fought at least one pitched battle on the very shore of the sea, but without lasting success, for it soon appears that Iluma-Ilum was able to make himself master of part of Sumer as far north as Nippur. At the same time, Uruk declared its independence again. We possess a number of inscriptions on stone and clay, written in good Sumerian, by the kings of Uruk, Sin-gashid, Sin-gamil and Anam, who almost certainly reigned at this time. The first-named built himself a palace which has been excavated and from which many inscriptions come, and also repaired the holy temple E-anna and rebuilt the shrine on the summit of its *ziggurat*. Anam rebuilt the walls of the city which Samsu-Iluna had destroyed.

The division between the kings of Babylon and those of the Sealand continued during the reign of Abêshuh (1874–

¹ There were several other rebellions, including one by a pretender who took the name of Rim-Sin, but space forbids a close study of internal politics at this period.

1847, according to the reckoning employed here), son of Samsu-Iluna, who attacked Iluma-Ilum and, so a chronicle says, tried unsuccessfully to drown him out of a position he was holding by damming the Tigris. The only other notable act of his reign was his dedication of a statue of that ancient Sumerian prince, Entemena of Lagash,¹ who had been posthumously deified and whose worship, for some reason, appears to have been popular at Babylon. This is an example of the degree to which the Semitic Babylonians assimilated every usage and tradition of the Sumerians whom they were crowding out of existence.

Ammititana, his successor (prob. 1846-1810), appears to have made some headway against the usurping power of the Sealand, re-establishing Babylonian control over Nippur and Isin. Iluma-Ilum died during his reign (prob. 1824 B.C.) and was succeeded by Itti-Ili-nibi. The successor of Ammititana was Ammizaduga, in whose reign were made the important astronomical observations which—could but the modern astronomers be induced to agree as to their date—would fix the whole of Babylonian chronology for us, as far back as the III Dyn. of Ur at any rate. Since they are still unable to decide among themselves, however, whether the phenomena recorded as having taken place in the seventeenth year of Ammizaduga are to be dated to 1796 or 1716 B.C., it seems safer for the mere historian to base his calculations upon other sources. In his eleventh year, this monarch claims to have built a fortress called Dur-Ammizaduga, 'Ammizaduga's Wall', at the very mouth of the Euphrates. This would seem to indicate that the power of the Sealand kings had been severely weakened, but we have no details.

Samsu-ditana was the eleventh king of his dynasty, the last of the blood of Hammurabi and Suwu-abum to occupy the Babylonian throne. In one of his date-formulæ, he claims in vague terms to have gained a victory over some unspecified foe. It is left to a later chronicler to record the disaster which overtook him at the end, telling us that in his last year (it was probably 1754 B.C.) warriors of the *Hittites* invaded Babylonia, sacked Babylon, carried away the images of

¹ See Ch. III.

EPILOGUE

Marduk and his consort, Sarpanitum, and no doubt put Samsu-ditana to death. This record raises one of the major problems of later Babylonian history. The Hittites, who were to play such a gigantic rôle in the drama of what we have agreed to call the Imperial Age, do not really come within the limitations of the present text-book. It is enough to say here that—thanks chiefly to the work of German scholars—we now know that, by the middle of the II millennium B.C., there were settled in the fertile plain of eastern Asia Minor, just west of the Anti-Taurus Mts., a race or group of races speaking several different Indogermanic dialects, all of which are akin, not so much to the language of the ‘Āryan’ conquerors of India as to the ancient Indogermanic tongues of Europe, in particular, to Latin. This able, warlike and intelligent race had made itself master of the original (often called Protohittite) inhabitants of Asia Minor and was, in centuries outside our present scope, to build up a great empire in Syria under the leadership of a dynasty of vigorous kings, many of whose records and chronicles we can read to-day.

So far, good ; but the term ‘Hittite’, as used by surrounding nations such as the Babylonians, is a very vague one. It is applied indiscriminately to the various races of eastern Asia Minor, and also to the Semitic-speaking races of northern Syria who afterward came under the rule of the Hittite emperors and their vassals. (‘Uriah the Hittite’, for example, the victim of David’s treachery, has a pure Hebrew name.) When the Babylonian chronicle, then, says that ‘Hittites’ sacked Babylon in Samsu-ditana’s time, we cannot be at all certain that this means that the European invaders who had recently settled in Asia Minor actually led an army as far east as el-‘Irâq. It is rather like the old solution of the problem of the Iliad, ‘that it was not written by Homer, but by another man of the same name’. At first sight, it looks as though the Hittite records discovered at Boghazköi in Asia Minor gave an unambiguous answer to the question. In one of them, we read how a certain king of the Hittites *went to Babylon and sacked Babylon, fought likewise with the Hurri, and laid up the prisoners and spoil from Babylon in the city of Hattusas*¹ (i.e. Boghazköi,

¹ From the German transl. of Hrozný, *Hethitische Texte*.

the Hittite capital). The name of this conqueror was Mursilis I, and it is tempting to suppose that it was he who overcame Samsu-ditana. But a serious objection to this theory is that if Mursilis I lived as early as the XVIII cent. B.C., then there is a gap of something like 250 years in the Hittite historical records, for we know of only five Hittite kings between him and Dudhalias I who is quite definitely to be dated as late as the extreme end of the XV cent. Most scholars, accordingly, prefer to put Mursilis I and his sack of Babylon at about 1550 B.C. and assume that the 'Hittite' invasion which brought the dynasty of Hammurabi crashing was the victory of some earlier conqueror.

Whichever explanation is correct, we can learn at least two important lessons from this scanty record. The first is the growing interdependence of widely separated countries, such as Asia Minor and el-'Irâq. This interdependence was to be, as we have seen in Chapter I, the feature of the now not very distant Imperial Age. No longer were the great civilized nations isolated from one another as in the past. Centuries of commerce and conquest had trampled paths all over Middle Asia, so that while in Sargon of Agade's time the peninsula of Asia Minor seemed as remote from Babylon as did India from England in the days of Queen Elizabeth, it was now, apparently, already possible for armies to march between the two without causing any particular surprise.

The second lesson we learn is of the almost unexampled turmoil into which the peoples of the middle East had been thrown by the intrusion upon them of the Indogermanic-speaking invaders from Europe. The effects of this turmoil are to be seen over the whole of our chosen area, and even farther afield. At the far eastern extremity of our province, the marvellous civilization of ancient India was soon to disappear into oblivion before the attacks of the Âryans. Farther west, we see Babylonia threatened on the one hand by the Kassites under their Âryan leaders and invaded on the other by 'Hittites' who, if they are not the actual Indogermanic settlers in Asia Minor, are at any rate people who had been displaced by them. Farther north-west again, we shall presently find another group of Indogermanic adventurers

EPILOGUE

carving out a kingdom for themselves among the Shubarian Hurri of Mesopotamia proper.

Nor is this all. This thrust of nations across Asia from west to east displaced and disturbed older peoples. The Semitic-speaking nations of Syria were flung into confusion by the pressure of invaders in the north. Some of them (and it is not altogether impossible that people from Asia Minor, either Hittites or tribes displaced by the Hittites, were mixed with them) sought to escape this pressure by migrating southward into Egypt. Everyone has heard of those *Hyksos* or *Shepherd Kings* whose conquest of the Nile Valley forms the great dividing epoch between the earlier and later history of ancient Egypt. Egyptologists are generally agreed that this conquest took place very shortly after 1780 B.C. The great Pharaoh Amûnemha't I, founder of the XII Dyn., who rescued Egypt from the anarchy which had followed the ending of the Pyramid Age, began to rule, in all probability, in or about the year 2000 B.C. His dynasty endured 213 years and was thus almost precisely contemporary with the I Dyn. of Babylon. Very shortly after its close, Egypt was invaded by a horde of Asiatic foreigners who were able to overcome the natives by means of the *horses and chariots* which they possessed and which had previously been unknown on the Nile. Judging by such of their names as have been recorded, the language which these people spoke was a Semitic one ; but the use of horses in warfare points to their having been in contact with the Indo-germanic invaders of Asia. Research—notably by Sir Flinders Petrie—in Palestine has shown that these invading horsemen settled there also, and some daring historians have even imagined a great Hyksos Empire reaching from Egypt to Northern Syria ; but of this there is no real evidence.

The XVIII cent. B.C., then, was an epoch in human history ; was, in a sense, the starting-point of the modern world. It was a birth, like all births, full of pain and terror. The old unstable world of fragile and changeable civilizations, precariously erected against the winds of barbarism, was being drummed out of existence to the sound of horse-hooves. The day of splendid isolation closed in a sunset across which we may see riding figures that speak with tongues not wholly

different from our own. Crushed together by the increasing pressure of invasion, forced into migrations and resettlements, the peoples of the middle East became conscious of each other's existence to a degree unknown before. Communications which until recently had been difficult and sporadic now grew commonplace. Egypt, under the great Pharaohs of the Pyramid Age and the XII Dyn., by establishing maritime colonies in Syria and Palestine, and Akkad, by the conquests of Sargon and Narâm-Sin, had led the way. But what had been rare and laborious in the past would soon be universal ; and soon Egypt, the Hittites and Assyria would be actively disputing with one another the possession of lands which, a few centuries before, only rare travellers from any one of them had visited.

At the moment, however, so far at least as Babylonia was concerned, what was actually the dawn of a new era must have seemed only the return of chaos and old night. He would have been a bold prophet who, in 1757 B.C., foretold that the society and polity nourished by Hammurabi was anything but doomed. Babylon lay in ruins. The kings of the Sealand ruled the country, as much as anyone could be said to rule it. The Hittite raid was not repeated, but the Kassite was ; and it was probably in 1746 B.C., according to the chronological scheme adopted here, that one of the Âryan leaders of the newcomers, by name *Gandash*, had himself proclaimed king of Babylon.

The *Dynasty of Kashshû* which was thus founded was one of the longest-lived in human history, comprising thirty-six kings who ruled for a total of 576 years ; or in other words, for rather longer than the period between the Battle of Créçy and the present day. There was a Kassite on the throne of Babylon before Joseph was sold into Egypt, and a Kassite held that throne when Samson bore away the gates of Gaza. We have frequently noticed, in past chapters, how savage invaders of el-'Irâq fell at last under the enchantment of the very culture that they had at first thought to destroy. The Kassites—both the original highlanders and their Âryan ruling class—were certainly no less savage than the Amorites and the Gutî had been when they first entered Babylonia ; but

EPILOGUE

never before had the spell worked so swiftly. No sooner was Gandash on the throne than he began to comport himself like a true Babylonian sovereign, rebuilding the temples at Babylon and Nippur and carving inscriptions not only in Babylonian but even in mangled and ungrammatical Sumerian. Nor was this simply the readiness of an ambitious savage to sink his connection with his past and identify himself with the more cultured race among whom he sojourned. Quite the contrary, the Kassite rulers were possessed of a very proper racial pride, such as distinguishes the Indogermanic-speaking peoples everywhere. More than five hundred years were to elapse before they abandoned their Âryan names and assumed Semitic ones. *King of the Kashshû* was one of their favourite titles. They continued the worship of their own gods of sky and wind whilst more or less identifying them with appropriate figures out of the native Babylonian pantheon. Where the customs of the land did not meet with their approval, they went about to change them. The old clumsy Sumerian system of dating years by events—which must have been as maddening to those who used it as it is pleasing to us who archæologize over them—seemed to them absurd, and they promptly dropped it in favour of the more rational system of dating documents by the year of the king's reign. Like broadminded men, they paid due reverence to the Babylonian gods, but it does not appear that they kept up the custom of the Amorite princes of loading their temples with thrones and statues of precious metal. The whole keynote of their policy was a rather uninspired common sense.

The reason why life in Babylon under their rule differed as little as it did from life there under Hammurabi is to be sought in one factor and one only—in the organizing and administrative genius of that wonderful ruler. The Âryan Kassites were more—and consciously more—completely foreign intruders than almost any race who had previously thrust themselves into el-'Irâq. But they were essentially a practical race. They found the economic and official life of Babylonia, impaired though it was by internal dissensions and foreign inroads, still flowing along the channels into which the great lawgiver had directed it; and those channels were so reasonable, so

admirably adapted to the nature of the land and its inhabitants, that they had no call to change them. Hammurabi, building on the best of the Sumerian and Akkadian past, had founded or at least had finally consolidated a social order so durable that it was able to withstand the shock of invasion as no previous ordering of affairs had done. To realize the magnitude of his achievement, we need only compare the minuteness of the breach made in the continuity of Babylonian life by the arrival of the Kassites with the complete destruction of the powerful ancient civilization of India by the Āryans. Hammurabi had built his house upon a rock.

Most significant in this connection of all, perhaps, is the fact that the comparatively upstart city of Babylon remained the capital of Sumer and Akkad. Soon, indeed, it was to be the sole capital, as in Hammurabi's day. The Dynasty of the Sealand continued to reign after Gandash had obtained the Babylonian crown. Nine kings ruled from 1717 to 1514 B.C. or thereabouts, and three of them—Aidarakalamma, Ekurullanna and Melamkurkurra—actually bore Sumerian names. That Sumerian was the language that they spoke, that, indeed, the word 'Sumerian' had any more significance to them than that of a vague symbol of southern independence, we may fairly doubt. That amazing race whose fortunes and achievements have been a chief theme of this book had ceased to have any separate existence, was swamped finally in the flood of newcomers, and dead, leaving to later occupants of its home a rich bequest of wisdom and tradition and setting, so, its mark on things still to be formed.

The Sealand kings eked out a dissident existence among the canebrakes and mudflats of the Persian Gulf, an almost impenetrable wilderness whence rebels and Spartacists have always been able to hurl defiance at the central government, until the reign of the thirteenth Kassite king, Burna-Buriash I (prob. 1521-1503 B.C.), who sent his younger son, Ulam-Buriash, against them with an army. Ulam-Buriash overthrew the last Sealand king, Ea-gamil, probably in 1517 B.C., and became viceroy of the Sealand on behalf of his father. Even then, so far as we can judge from the confused and contradictory records at our disposal, a 'forlorn-hope' continued

EPILOGUE

to hold out in the fortified town of Dur-Ea, which was not captured till the reign of the Kassite Agum III (prob. 1483-1465 B.C.). With their reduction of this, the last stronghold of political separatism, and the consequent erection of Babylon into the very undoubted capital of the whole land, we may bid a final good-bye to the Kassite kings of Babylonia.

Concerning the neighbouring state of Assyria, soon to emerge as a world-power upon the field of international politics, there remains yet a little to be said. In Hammurabi's day, both Nineveh and Ashur had been vassal-cities of the Babylonian crown. They regained their independence actually before the end of Hammurabi's reign, for we know that the first of their really powerful monarchs, *Shamshi-Adad I*, many of whose inscriptions were found by the German excavators at Ashur, was a contemporary of his. He was typical of the new age in whose dawn he lived, a forerunner just as Hammurabi had been. The breaking-down of international barriers, the military and commercial expansion, which was to be the great future of middle Eastern history in future years, has been discussed already. The process was one of peculiar importance to Assyria, a tiny state, dependent for her existence on foreign trade and surrounded by savage tribes and jealous larger powers. The vital necessity of her economic and political life was the control of the great trade-routes which joined her to Syria and Asia Minor on the one hand and Babylonia and Elam on the other. With Shamshi-Adad she embarks on the policy, which she was later to follow to its extreme conclusion, of dominating these routes by force of arms. That monarch writes : *Truly I received in the midst of my city of Ashur the tribute of the kings of Tukrish and the king of the highland. I set up my mighty name and my memorial in the land of Labân on the shore of the Great Sea.* Tukrish lay in the eastern hills, close to Marhashi, whilst the 'highland' might even be Elam itself. The disturbances among the people of the Mountain Barrier had doubtless made punitive expeditions necessary. But 'Labân on the shore of the Great Sea' can hardly be anywhere but coastal Syria, between the Lebanon Mts. and the Mediterranean, one of the loveliest countries in the world. Later kings, both of Assyria and Egypt, carved their memorials here,

on the rocky walls of the Nahr-el-Kalb gorge near Beyrût. Doubtless it was from the Lebanon that Shamshi-Adad obtained the cedar-wood of which, he says, he made doors and roofs for the temple of Enlil at Ashur. His achievement was a very great one. He had established the Assyrian control of the caravan-routes eastward into the hills and westward to the Mediterranean by force of arms. The result was an immediate accession of prosperity in Assyria, and this the king records in a most interesting note. *When I built the house of my lord Enlil, the market-price of my city of Ashur verily was fixed:—For one shekel of silver, two gur of grain; for one shekel of silver, fifteen minæ of wool; for one shekel of silver, two sat of oil.* Singashid of Uruk, who was almost precisely contemporary with Shamshi-Adad, makes a very similar boast, but his prices were even lower.

Shamshi-Adad's reign is followed by an obscure period of which we have few monuments. That his empire was lost and his kingdom reduced to straits during the days of the Kassite and Hittite invasions of Babylonia, we cannot doubt. The Kassite kings were, of course, in friendly alliance with the hill-tribes from whom their original subjects had been drawn, and this must have had the result of making them hostile to Assyria. The great economic question of the control of the trade-routes was certainly an even keener cause of enmity. There is reason for believing that the earlier Kassites were actually able, in imitation of Hammurabi, to establish some hazy sort of overlordship over the Assyrians. At any rate, when the mists clear and we are able to gain an insight into Assyro-Babylonian politics again, we find that boundary-disputes and quarrels of precedence are common between the two kingdoms and that an intermittent warfare over these matters—or at least, with these matters as a pretext for the struggle to control the trade-routes—will absorb much of the energy of both parties for about four hundred years.

One more factor in the coming drama of imperialism may be foreshadowed in this volume, though it really lies somewhat beyond its scope. An Âryan royal house governed Babylonia. A mighty Indogermanic power was springing up in Asia Minor. But in yet a third place, men speaking a tongue distantly akin

EPILOGUE

to ours were to attain prominence. It has been stated previously that, ever since the formation of the Assyrian kingdom, the plain of Mesopotamia proper had remained in the hands of a Shubarian people called the *Hurri*. It appears that in the XV cent. B.C., a group of men of undoubtedly similar race to that which had placed itself at the head of the Kassite tribes managed to weld these Hurri into a kingdom, the kingdom of *Mitanni* or *Mitlani*, whose capital was at Washshukanni, a site which is perhaps to be identified with the modern Fekheriyeh near the source of the Khabûr River. Despite its purely artificial nature and complete lack of natural defences, this kingdom—thanks chiefly to the astute and unscrupulous diplomacy of its kings—was to play an important part in world-affairs for about a century and form a serious obstacle to the imperialist ambitions of Assyria.

The stage is set, now, for events we shall not stay to watch. The expulsion of the Shepherd Kings from Egypt by the Pharaoh 'Ahmose the Liberator, founder of the glorious XVIII Dyn. in about 1580 B.C., and Egypt's subsequent bid for world-empire which ended in her carrying her victorious arms even east of the Euphrates and receiving tribute from the rulers of Mesopotamia, marks the full dawn of the Imperial Age, in which the civilized nations of the middle East found themselves as mutually dependent (even when mutually hostile) as the nations of the modern world. The Egyptian revival was followed by the long and bloody debate between the Pharaohs and the Great Kings of the Hittites over the dominion of Syria, which ended—soon after Pharaoh Rameses II had, by his personal heroism, saved the Egyptian army from annihilation at the disastrous battle of Kadesh—in the complete exhaustion of both contestants. The way was now—at the end of the XIII cent. B.C.—open to Assyria, which at once embarked on the long tale of conquests that, despite continual reverses, was to last until Ashurbânipal (668–626 B.C.) ruled from Persia to Egypt over an empire vaster than any previously known in history: and with the VII cent. B.C. we are already on the threshold of the modern world.

APPENDIX

*Chronological Tables, with a note on the Mari Documents and the
date of Hammurabi*

ASSYRIA

AKKAD

SUMER

SYRIAN CULTURE

(' Arpachiyeh ')

Copper and flint, buildings on stone foundations, polychrome pottery; traces of affinity with Ægean area; Nineveh founded.

HIGHLAND CULTURE

(' el-'Ubeid ')

Apparently derived from Elam: Uruk, Ur and Eridu founded.

HIGHLAND CULTURE

Apparently derived from Babylonia.

NORTHERN CULTURE

(' Uruk ')

Earliest use of writing, large buildings on stone foundations, ziggurats, etc.

JEMDET-NASR CULTURE

Roughly-painted polychrome pottery, sculptured monuments, cremation.

Kish and Eshnunna founded. Shuruppak founded.

EARLY DYNASTIC PERIOD

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | I Dyn. of Kish? | I Dyn. of Uruk? |
| Assyrian civilization influenced by 'Susa 2' Culture. | Semitic Akkadians beginning to enter Babylonia. | |
| Ashur founded? | | ' Royal Tombs ' at Ur? |
| Sumerians established in Assyria | | I Dyn. of Ur. c. 2950 B.C.? |
| | II Dyn. of Kish? | Ur-Nina of Lagash |
| | | II Dyn. of Uruk c. 2800 B.C.? |
| | | Entemena of Lagash |
| Assyria incorporated in Akkadian Empire. | III Dyn. of Kish. | II Dyn. of Ur. c. 2660 B.C.? |
| | Dyn. of Agade (Sargon), c. 2568 B.C. | III Dyn. of Uruk (Lugalzaggisi) c. 2590 B.C. |
| Ashur destroyed probably c. 2450 B.C. | Gutian Invasion and collapse of Akkadian Empire c. 2426 B.C. | |
| First appearance of Assyrian nation. | | IV Dyn. of Uruk, c. 2385 B.C. |

ELAM

W. INDIA

Possible dates
B.C. (approximate)

HIGHLAND CULTURE

('Susa 1')

Copper and flint, linen, black-painted pottery; Susa and Persepolis founded.

Indian minerals exported to Babylonia.

4000

NORTHERN OR ANATOLIAN- TRANSCAUCASIAN CULTURE

intrusive on Highland culture: plain black, red or grey pottery; traces of affinity with Asia Minor.

('Amri Culture' *may possibly* have preceded 'Indus Valley' Culture.)

3500

INDUS VALLEY CULTURE

'Susa 2' Culture

Mixed civilization showing Jemdet-Nasr, Indian and Sumerian influences.

Already established in Sindh and the Panjab: Plain and painted pottery, fine sculpture, writing, bronze, planned brick-built cities.

Evidence of trade-relationship with Babylonia.

3000

Elam defeated by Eannatum of Lagash, prob. c. 2800 B.C.

'Early Period' at Mohenjo-Daro (previous levels unexplored).

'Intermediate Period' at Mohenjo-Daro.

2500 Elam conquered by Sargon and his son Rimush.

'Late Period' at Mohenjo-Daro.

'Highland Culture' established in N. Baluchistan.

Mohenjo-Daro deserted in perhaps c. 2400 B.C.

Harappā continues to be occupied.

NOTE ON THE MARI DOCUMENTS AND THE DATE OF HAMMURABI

The discovery, among the 20,000 tablets and fragments unearthed by M. André Parrot at Mari, of a number of official documents mentioning Hammurabi and Rim-Sin has thrown a flood of light upon the events of the late Isin-Larsam period. As is often the case, however, the first effect of this new illumination has been to dazzle our eyes until we can hardly recognize familiar objects.

From preliminary studies, published by MM. Dossin and Thureau-Dangin after the MS. of the present text-book was already completed, the following rather disconcerting facts emerge. Toward the end of the Isin-Larsam period, Mari was ruled by an Amorite monarch named Yahdunlim or Yahdullim, who apparently met with a violent end and was succeeded by one Yasmah-Adad, who can be definitely identified as a son and contemporary of the powerful Shamshi-Adad I of Assyria. Mari, then, was at this time under Assyrian rule. Later, however, the Assyrian yoke was thrown off, and Zimrilim, son of Yahdunlim, established himself as an independent monarch. So far, nothing very startling has emerged. The shock comes when we discover that Zimrilim (who probably only regained the throne of Mari after the death of Shamshi-Adad of Assyria) flourished during the *earlier* years of Hammurabi and was a witness to the whole debate between Babylon and Larsam. Among the many proofs of this we may instance a letter from one of Zimrilim's ministers containing this passage : *There exists no king who is powerful on his own account. Ten, fifteen kings go after Hammurabi the Babylonian ; after Rim-Sin the Larsamite, the same ; after Iba'wel the Eshnunite the same. . . .*

Another despatch gives definite evidence that, for a time, Rim-Sin and Hammurabi, so far from being at war with one another, had actually entered into a defensive alliance against some unnamed enemy.

The extent to which this information traverses the reconstruction of affairs offered in Chs. VI-VII of the present volume is obvious. The crucial point is that Shamshi-Adad of Assyria is shown to belong to an *earlier* instead of a *later* generation than Hammurabi, and to have ruled *before*, and not *after* the latter's ephemeral domination of Assyria. Further, the identification of Rim-Sin, king of Assyria, with the great Rim-Sin of Larsam is now in doubt, for between the Assyrian ruler of that name and Shamshi-Adad the Assyrian chronicles insert three other kings. It is possible (since the Mari documents show that Elamite influence was stronger in Upper Mesopotamia than had been supposed) that the Larsamite did actually rule in Ashur—having been established there by his father, Kudur-

APPENDIX

Mabug—before he succeeded to the throne of Larsam ; but in any event, the speculations contained in Ch. VI concerning the part played by Assyria in the final struggle between Larsam and Babylon must now be disregarded.

Still more serious, however, is the effect of these new synchronizations upon our notion of the *absolute* chronology of the period. On the evidence of the Assyrian monuments and chronicles, it seems difficult to date Shamshi-Adad I earlier than about the middle of the XIX cent. B.C. Yet if this be correct, what becomes of our date of *c.* 1955 B.C. for the accession of Hammurabi? Even the later date of 1940, preferred by many English scholars, would now seem to be perhaps a century too early. Since the synchronization of reigns for the Dyns. of Babylon, Larsam and Isin is definitely fixed, an alteration of one date necessitates an alteration of all, and this in turn will force us to revise our dates for all the previous Dyns.

To what extent this revision may really prove necessary it is early yet to say. Further research may reveal a means of raising the date of Shamshi-Adad to the XX cent. The full publication of all the historical documents from Mari—eagerly awaited by Assyriologists—may provide further and equally important synchronisms. To draw final conclusions from the partial view of the material which is all we possess for the moment would be premature. To cling, in the face of what is already revealed, to a chronology which seemed plausible enough at the time when this text-book was composed would be idiotic. All that the writer can conscientiously do, pending further discoveries, is to warn the reader to *disregard entirely* the dates used in Chs. V, VI and VII, and to accept those tentatively proposed in the earlier Chs. more than ever *cum grano*.

For convenience of reference, a table of the kings of Isin and Larsam, and of Babylon down to Hammurabi, showing their relative order but proposing no dates, is added to this Appendix (see next page).

